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HIBBARD, BILLY

TITLE:

MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE AND TRAVELS OF ...

PLACE:

NEW YORK

DATE:

1843

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Memoirs of the life and travels of B. Hibbard, minister of the Gospel, containing an account of his experience of religion and of his call to and labors in the ministry, for nearly fifty years; in which are recorded many important, curious and interesting events, illustrative of the providence and grace of God. 2d ed. New York, Printed for and published by the author, 1843.
474 p. port.

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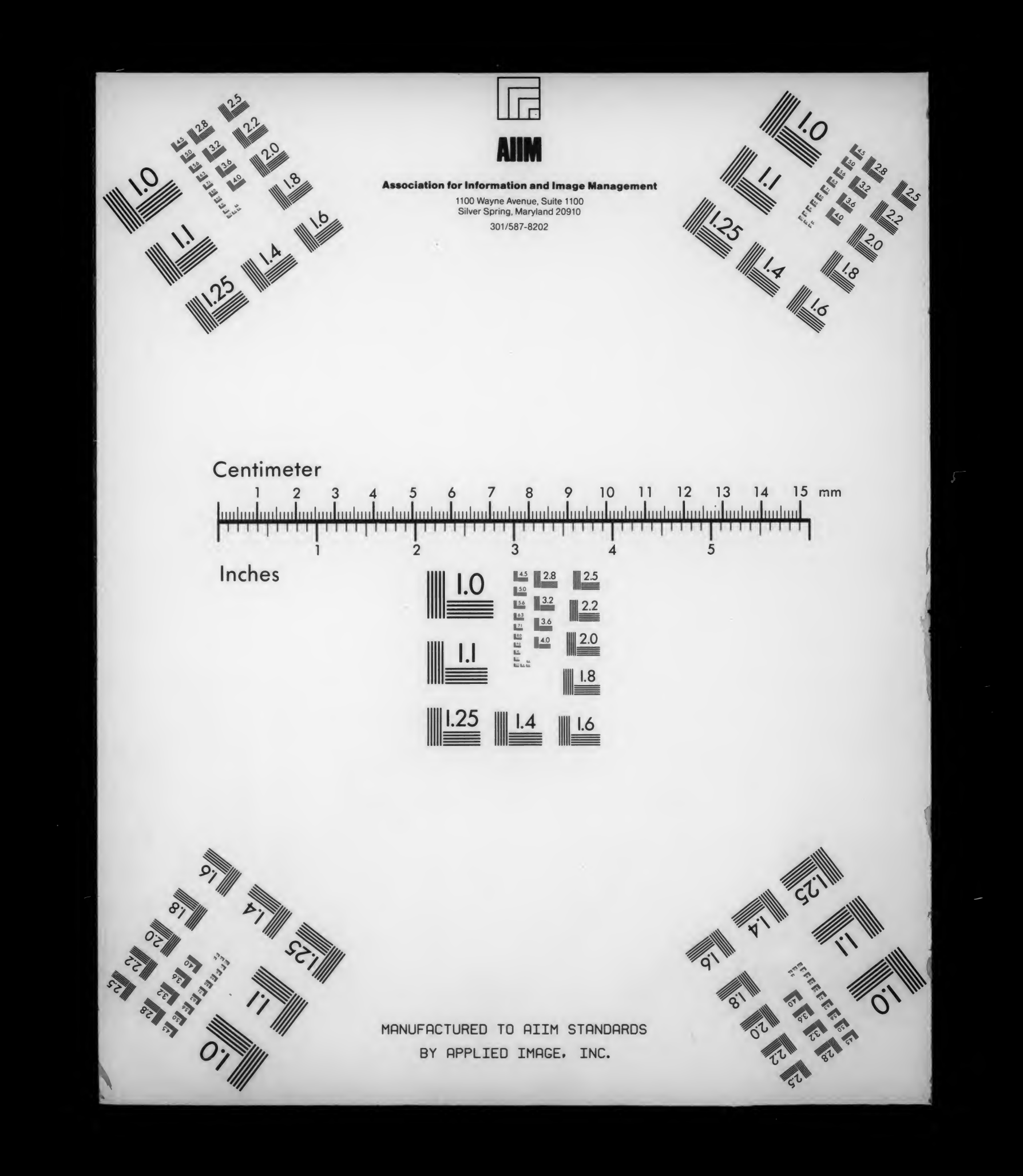
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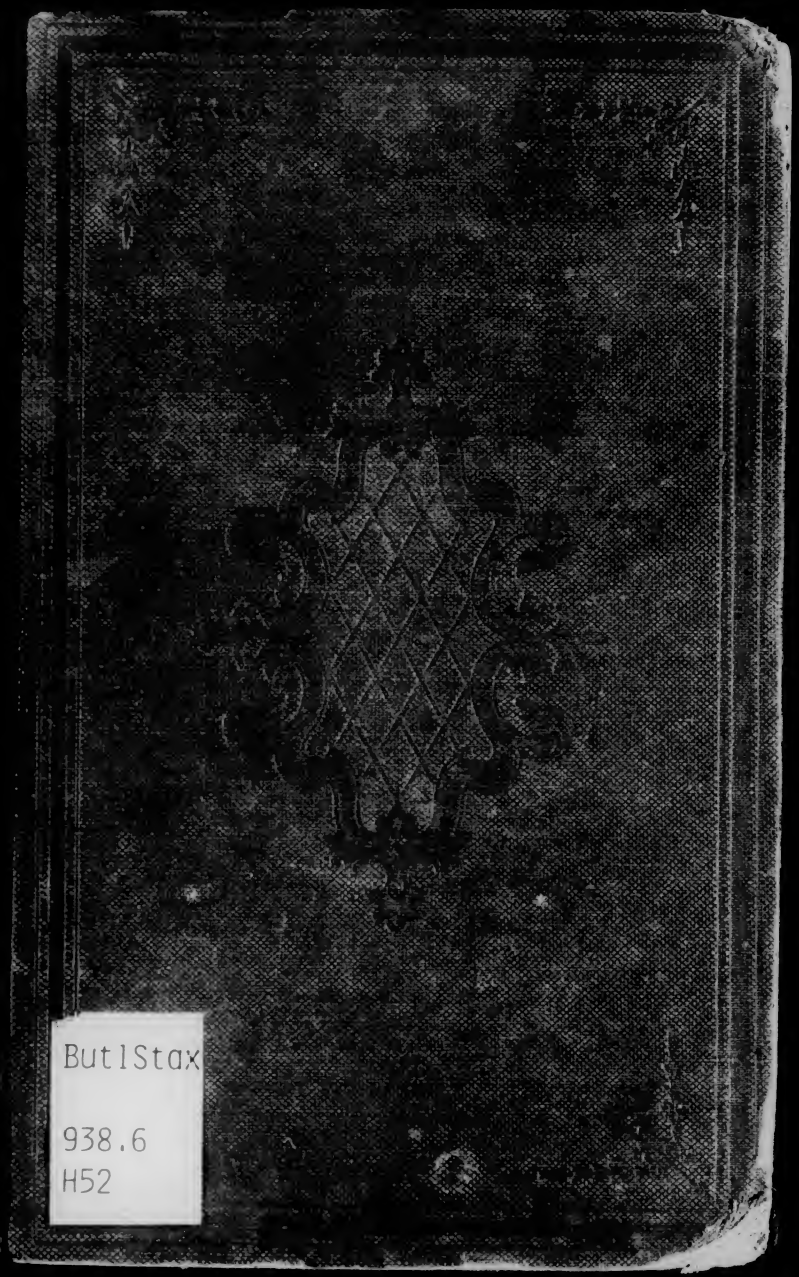
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WM. B. HIBBARD.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND TRAVELS

OF

B. HIBBARD,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL,

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF HIS

EXPERIENCE OF RELIGION;

AND OF HIS

CALL TO AND LABORS IN THE MINISTRY,

FOR

NEARLY FIFTY YEARS:

IN WHICH ARE RECORDED MANY IMPORTANT, CURIOUS AND INTERESTING EVENTS,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE PROVIDENCE AND GRACE OF GOD.

SECOND EDITION.

Never hew blocks with a razor.—*Swift.*

He must be a truly honest man, who is willing to be always open to the inspection of honest men.—*Duke La Roche.*

NEW-YORK:

PRINTED FOR AND PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR.

Piercy & Reed, Printers, 9 Spruce-Street.

1843.

Bancroft

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PREFACE.

In a preface it is expected the author will give some reason for his publication: to meet this expectation I would remark, that having been so unfortunate, about four years ago, as to rupture a blood vessel, while preaching in Forsyth-street Church, in New-York, which occasioned a hæmorrhage and inflammation of my lungs, and thereby rendered me incapable of preaching, except occasionally; and my desire to benefit my fellow creatures being as great as ever, and having been requested by my venerable friend and father in the Gospel, Bishop Asbury, more than twenty years ago, to keep a journal of my travels, and note down the extraordinary occurrences I might be called to witness; I thought I could not employ my time more usefully now in my worn down state than by writing and publishing the memoirs of my life: and feeling a confidence of the truth and importance of the maxims I have taken for a motto, "Never to hew blocks with a razor," and that "He must be a truly honest man who is willing to be

always open to the inspection of honest men :' I therefore present it, such as it is, to a candid public, hoping and ardently praying, that Christians of all denominations may find it a means of increasing their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and of encouraging the timid, doubting souls to press into that kingdom that is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost. If these effects are produced, then will be accomplished the ultimate desire of THE AUTHOR.

MEMOIRS.

OF

B. HIBBARD.

I was born in Norwich, in the state of Connecticut, on February 24th, 1771. My father, NATHAN HIBBARD, was by trade a tanner and shoemaker, and of good report for honesty among all his acquaintance; he had married MAHETABLE CROSBY, by whom he had ten children, of which I was the eighth. This woman was said to be very pious; she died, however, when I was about two years old. Her two last children were twins, they both died in a short time after they were born, and she followed them in a few days, in the assurance of faith and in hope of a blessed immortality. My father lived a widower about seven months, and then by the advice of many respectable neighbors, he married Miss PHEBE FITCH; and truly this was one of the best of women; the first things of importance that I can remember, were the instructions of this good woman: she taught me my prayers, and to fear God and keep his commandments.

In the year 1775 we heard of war; the British had sent Thomas Gage with a fleet and army to

Boston to reduce the colonies to subjection. In a little while we heard of the dreadful battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill,—all was bustle and noise of war; soldiers were called out; my father and four uncles went; I asked my mother if the regulars would kill them: she said, I hope not, child; but I saw tears in her eyes as she spoke. At night she instructed me to pray for my father, and to pity the regulars who were sent over by the king of England to kill us, if we did not submit to his tyrannical laws. But she hoped the Lord would save us from his tyranny.

My mind was impressed with a sense of pity for the soldiers; because they were forced to fight for the support of wicked rulers, and if they succeeded to enslave us in this land, as they themselves were enslaved in England, we too should be obliged to fight to support wicked rulers. But I prayed most earnestly, that God would deliver us from their power. My mind being occupied with these matters, and hearing so much of fighting and war, I had many dreams of battles. I saw armies meet, and balls fly thick and swift. In one of these visionary battles I thought my brother was wounded; he lay bleeding on the ground, I went to call my uncles who were in the ranks, firing at the enemy, to take my wounded brother away; but as I drew near to them, I saw the enemy in great numbers, pouring down from a hill: their glittering armour and the awful clangour of arms, threatened immediate destruction to our little army. I thought surely we

must all be destroyed, and none but the Lord can save us. I therefore raised my hands towards heaven, and cried out. "O Lord deliver us from our enemies." That moment I saw smoke mingled with gravel stones and streaks of fire falling from heaven, between the enemy and our men, which spread over the enemy, and immediately all fighting ceased. There seemed to be but few of the enemy that came out of the smoke, and they all appeared friendly; all the wounded were healed; the sky immediately cleared off, and a light, above the brightness of the sun, shone all over the firmament.

By this dream I was encouraged to pray, and trust in the Lord: I believed God would fight the battles of America, and that finally our enemies would become friends. So much for a mother's instruction, by which, while young, I learned to fear and hope in God.

I went to school the principal part of the time, from four until I was six years old, and met with no abuse; but now the scene changed, for we had a very tyrant in school for a master, and it seemed he took pleasure in torturing me. I knew not why he flogged me so frequently, and so unjustly, until after he was turned out of school. But so it was; I was so whipped and feruled, and kept to hard study, that I pined away to a mere skeleton; and thereby excited the compassion of my parents and neighbors, so that they inquired the cause. But I dared not tell them for fear of violating the laws of my parents and my master, who had taught me, "not to

tell tales out of school." However, some scholars told their parents, so that the matter came to light, and he was soon expelled from the district without a recommendation.

Notwithstanding that I suffered uncommon hardships, I learned more in that school than any other, for the length of time; for, besides what knowledge I got of reading and English Grammar, and many pieces I could recite, I learned much of human nature. It would be expected that I should know the rules of this school, and remember those rules, especially when I was so frequently flogged for transgressing them, such as "not to look off my book, while studying or reading." Sometimes when I stopt to spit, or blow my nose, I was accused of looking off my book, and called up and flogged. Sometimes a scholar would whisper to me, so I would look off, and was flogged many times for this; but nothing was said to the one that whispered. The master pretended that he had great difficulty to keep *me* in order, and to make his task the lighter, he told the scholars they must tell him when I did amiss or did not mind my book, and they must also watch me, when I was out of school, and if I transgressed any rule to let him know. Thereby they would be good children in his opinion; but as for me, he said I was a very wicked boy. However, his reproofs never once convicted my conscience of sin. But my poor back has felt the smart of his rod, five times in a day, and for no other crime than looking off my book, or blowing my nose, or sitting cross-legged on my seat.

Once he boxed my ears and made my nose bleed and then whipped me, because one said I picked my nose and made it bleed. Another rule was to go directly home after school, and make no noise; this I transgressed once, for to be sure, I was the first to go home after school was out. One afternoon as I was running before the other scholars in a foot-path, near the wall, I trod on a snake that curled around my ancle: I screamed out once, before I thought of the master's law. I ran into the cart road and waited for the scholars, to whom I gave a true statement, and begged them not to tell the master; but they said they did not believe me, for I was a wicked boy, the master had said so, and they should tell him; so I slept but little that night, and the next day he called me up and gave me one whipping for screaming, and another for telling a lie, as he said, about the snake. This made me more cautious, to look where I stepped, lest another snake should frighten me into disobedience to the master's law. After this, I made no attempt to plead my cause, for I found when accused, if I denied it, I was whipped for the thing accused of, and again for lying:—as to lying, I could not feel a conviction of mind that I was guilty; and as for the lies of the master and his two or three favorites, I could not believe that an holy God would condemn me for their wickedness. But all the comfort I had, was, that if I died the Lord would take me to Heaven; also a persuasion of mind that something would transpire to relieve me, and that the judgment of the Lord

would follow the master, and the two that informed against me. This often rested with weight and assurance on my mind; and after I neglected to plead my cause, some of the scholars spoke for me and contradicted his two informants, which much displeased the master, and for which several of them were whipped.

I have often heard my mother and others say, that one of the scholars (a man thirty-three years of age,) who attended the school; had been one of my great friends; and it was conjectured, if it had not been for him, the master would have killed me. This man I can well remember: he did not know a letter in the book when he first came to school; and in four weeks he could read with a little prompting; I contracted a great liking for him; because he was so tender of me; in the intermission, he would get me by him to teach him his letters and first syllables: yet the master would not suffer him to have me to teach him in the school hours; but assigned the office to one of his favorites. This man spoke for me several times, and I escaped several whippings by his means. He would also shame the master's little favorites, in the noon hour, for informing against me; insomuch that one of them made his confession to me that he had done me wrong: but the other, like the master, repented not; though they had like to have ended my days. Now the cause of all this, was said to be simply this: my father, who was a tanner, and no barber by trade; though it was said he could shave well; was desired by the

master, to shave him on a training day; when he said he wished to appear to a good advantage among the ladies as spectator of the training. My father's razor was dull, so that he could neither shave close nor easy, and because of a little laughing at him about the girls, by my father and some others present, he became so enraged that, as they said, he looked more like a surly bull, than like a man. In this sour surly look, he went to training, to see the ladies, but they were too refined in sensibilities to be pleased with him, therefore they treated him with neglect; and he charged all the blame on my father, for shaving him so.

I have been the more particular in relating these occurrences, because I heard some years after, that this same master was hanged for forgery; that one of his favorites died in prison, where he was confined for some crime; and that the other was lost at sea, in his first setting out for himself. But notwithstanding they had been cruel to me, I felt sorrow for their unhappy fate when I heard of it, though I was confirmed in my opinion, that the spirit of malice practiced by the master upon me, and taught to his two favorites, with their habit of lying, was the cause of the curse.

When I found my suffering excited the sympathy of parents and neighbors, it contributed to raise my drooping spirits. I soon gained my health, and enjoyed great happiness in my mother's instructions. My father's prayer I thought to be very good, because I viewed him to be a good man, but as to

the prayer the master said over in school, though I could repeat it all verbatim, yet I never would use any of his expressions in my solemn prayers; because I thought he did not mean what he said in prayer; and therefore, it would be offensive to God, for me to use them. I must be sincere and mean as I said.

I had an idea that lying was one of the worst of sins, and dared not be guilty of that crime. It happened a little before we moved to Berkshire, I went to visit one of my school-mates, and we, in our rambles, came to a road near a neighbor's barn, where was a number of willow trees,—we were highly delighted with the willow sticks, and were breaking off some, when the owner, who was a stern man, came near and yelled out at us, "you villians! are you stealing my willow sticks, I'll hang you!" This frightened us so that we ran off and left all, and I continued on home. In calmly reasoning on this, I concluded that though I broke off some sticks, yet I could not view it to be stealing, because I did not know it to be wrong: but as for Mr. D——, he must hang me, or he would lie, and that would be his undoing for ever; so that I felt very badly, for I was not willing to be hung, and I was sorry to have the man lie; but I concluded to say nothing about it, as we were soon to move away, and I would keep at home, so I dispensed with going to see my grandfather because we had to go past Mr. D——'s house, and he might hang me. This worried my mind at times,—but when I was seventeen years old, a circumstance happened that settled the matter, as follows: It had been proposed by my father that my sister and I should go to Norwich on a visit, and though my fears had subsided about being hanged, yet I felt sorry for the foolish man, that he should threaten what would be a sin to perform. My anxiety was great to visit my native place; asleep or awake, I was intent upon my visit; and one night as I slept in the chamber under the roof, I dreamed that I was at Norwich, and after visiting where we had lived, I started to go to see my grandfather. On my way, as I was near Mr. D——'s, I thought of the willow sticks, and concluded that he could not scare me now as he did when I was a small boy; just then I saw a man coming with a rope in his hand; as we met, I knew him; he looked at me as stern as vengeance, and asked, "are you not the boy that got sticks from my willows?" I said, "I got sticks from some willows in the road round the point of that hill," (pointing toward the place;) "well" said he, "I said I would hang you, and now I shall do it," (fixing a noose in his rope to put over my head.) I said, "you will if you are stronger than I am," and drawing back my fist I let drive at his breast a full blow! He stood as one amazed, and afraid to stir; and I felt as though I had broken all the bones in my hand. I put my fist down by my side and passed along, rolling my eye at him, expressive of readiness to give him a harder blow than that: he seemed to sheer off as though he was as glad to leave me as I was him: my hand pained me so that I awoke, and found my

bed bloody, and the skin knocked off my knuckles so that the bones were bare. The next morning I found some pieces of skin on the rafter over my bed, in such a manner that I must have been sitting up in bed to give the blow in that place. The next morning I related the whole affair to the family, which made them laugh heartily. Now if I had been one of that sort of people that never have dreams, I should never have had to dress my wounded knuckles with the bones bare for five or six weeks; but this was an occasion to disclose all my crime of stealing willow sticks.

After we had moved to Berkshire county, in Massachusetts, my father was engaged in building a house, and having many workmen, he omitted prayer in his family, at which my mother was very uneasy; but my father intimated that he was doing right in the omission, because he was building a new house. About the same time some soldiers came home from the army, where they had learned to swear horribly, and when my mother reproved them, they said they had learned it in the army, where they thought it was right to swear, to make the soldiers brave and mind their duty; but here at home, they believed it would be as well to dispense with it, unless it was on some extraordinary occasion; but my mother would not allow swearing to be right on any occasion. My father also discountenanced the practice; but a difficulty arose in my mind when I contrasted the conduct of my father in neglecting prayer and that of the soldiers in swearing. My father said it was right for him to neglect prayer because he was building a new house, and had so many hands about him; and the soldiers said it was right for them to swear because it was war time: but my conscience sided with my mother's sentiment, that both were wrong; however, it was many years before my father began prayer again in his family, and those sentiments (of my father and the soldiers) obtained generally in the neighborhood; for many who had prayed in their families, left off, and others who would not swear at home, would nevertheless, swear profanely at raisings, at trainings, and when on a journey, or at a tavern. I remember, one day at a training, a boy swore wickedly, and another boy reproved him—he stared open his eyes and exclaimed, "why it's training day."

I was sent to school in this new settlement, and at first it seemed that the scholars and master, and the neighbors among whom I visited would never see a fault in me, for they praised every thing I did; but whether they saw a fault in me or not, I believe the Lord saw many, for I soon began to swear a little (carefully) when among the boys that practised it, though I dare not swear before those that I thought would tell my father; and when I first began to use profane language, though my mates were well pleased with it, yet my conscience was smitten with heavy reproof, so that for weeks I dared not swear at all; something often impressed my mind with an inquiry of, "why will ye die?" I can truly say, I had not known what guilt for sin was till now; and now

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I had only guilt for doing such things as I knew were wrong, and swearing I had known to be wrong: for some time there appeared two powers contending in my mind, whether I would indulge in swearing like the generality of boys, and the most of men, or whether I would live in the fear of God, as I had done. My father's plea for omitting prayer, and the swearer's plea for swearing, bore with weight on my mind; truly I liked my mother's plea better than any other; but then she had acknowledged that most of people were wicked, and it was a prevailing sentiment, that it was right to be in the fashion and follow general custom; so that after struggling three or four months, in which time I had spoken five or six wicked words, whereby I had lost all influence over my mates in reproving them, and all happiness in prayer or religious instruction, that it was not long before I could swear without troubling my conscience about it, and for three years I presume I was as wicked as any one; but in all this time I was too successful in keeping my wickedness hid from my parents, or they would have reproved me. My father was immersed in the cares of this world, summer and winter, in buildings, and in clearing up new land, and some merchandise. Many were the hardships of all classes of people the two last years of the war, and we had our share, but in no instance did I ever hear my father swear a profane oath. He was a jovial man in business, very apt to joke and jest, in a good natured way, but he must drive on work. My work was to go on errands, to ride about and collect debts, and go to mill, &c.

in which I had opportunity to swear without the knowledge of my parents; and when alone, I would study out the different modes of expressing myself wickedly, so as to excel in this business; for if a man did not go beyond the customary mode, he could not gain a respectful attention. I was so good a scholar in this science, that some swearers were frightened at what I said, and reproved me—they said I was too bad; this gave me some check, for I thought if I should go too far for the wicked themselves, that if my parents should know of it, and reprove me, I should have none to plead in my behalf, and I should of course fall into disgrace among all. About this time, as my father was one morning helping me away to the mill, after he had lifted me on the horse, he said, "Now, boy, do you behave well to-day, and don't let me hear of any more of your wicked talk." As he spoke the last words, turning his head away, he seemed to choke with grief; I saw a tear in his eye—he walked off and I rode on, but a dagger was in my heart. I began to consider the effect my wickedness had on my father; he was grieved beyond expression; my mother must be grieved too—and what a monster of a wretch was I to grieve such parents. If my wickedness would grieve them, and shock swearing men too, what will be the consequence of my wickedness to me? Why, truly, I must be damned, and hell must be my portion! Yes, my mother has often told me, that "the wicked must be turned into hell with all the nations that forget God;" and though I am now but eleven years old, and may

live a great while to enjoy sinful pleasures ; yet, what of all that, there is no happiness in it, for the wicked scorn me because I am too bad, and then I must be damned after all. Truly I am a wretch undone, and shall be damned at last ! Thus I had my meditation while riding four miles to mill. After the miller had taken off my grist, I went into the house to warm me ; his daughter was just then clearing the oven of coals, and threw them on the fire, which made it very bright. I sat looking into the fire, and thought, " must I lie in such a hot fire as that to all eternity." I fancied that I saw myself in the fire, writhing and turning myself to bear the torturing pain, when suddenly I saw the justice of God in my misery, because I had sinned ; a trembling seized me ; I was afraid the family would notice it, and ask the cause ; I arose and steered for the door—with difficulty I got out, and to keep from falling, I laid hold of the garden fence. After getting breath and strength, I walked round a little hill, out of sight, and there gave vent to my tears. Here for some time I lamented my profane swearing ; other wickedness I knew I was guilty of, but this sin was in my mind, the fountain of all my sins, because therein I treated God with contempt and cast off his fear ; I raised my mind in prayer, but there was no access to God. I thought I must break off from my sins before God would have mercy on me, and I must set about it immediately or there never could be any mercy for me ; I then looked round to see if any body saw me, for I wanted to speak out, though I believed that

God was omnipresent in hearing and seeing. When I found I was alone, I put my hands together, and raising them up, I said, " O Lord, I will not swear profanely any more :" adding a solemn vow to this promise. Now I thought I must pay unto the Lord this vow, or I should certainly be damned ; but now there was some hope of mercy if I repented aright, therefore it behoved me to pay close attention to keep my vow and not to swear any more. Also to break off from all other sins, although I had not so clear a sense of any sin as that of swearing, and I understood that real repentance was to be sensible of my sins, to feel a suitable sorrow for them, and also to forsake them. In order, therefore, that this and other sins might be clearly manifest to me, I made it a practice to use such language in prayer as this, " O Lord, teach me my sins." Then I would wait to have some sin brought to my thoughts : sometimes I had many sins brought to my remembrance, for which I would ask pardon with weeping eyes, expressing my sincere sorrow for them ; at other times when I said this short prayer, I would add, " and help me to repent aright," for I thought if I did not repent aright, I should be justly damned for unfaithfulness in repenting ; and lest I should be guilty of " using vain repetitions as the heathen do," I would wait solemnly with my mind intently fixed on God for an answer. I read the Scriptures with greater attention than ever, and in private I would weep and mourn for my sins ; I had some fears that I should not find mercy at last ; nevertheless I prayed

heartily that the Lord would spare my life until I could completely repent. At one time I felt encouraged, that if I were faithful, I should repent enough by the time I was thirty years old; but after awhile, I began to see that my sins were greater than I had thought them to be, that I had not felt sorrow enough for them, and that I had not made sufficient confession to obtain pardon, and now I must go over with them again. Now the most of my nights I spent in weeping; my pillow and my shirt collar were often wet with tears, and I would arise early to wash my face for fear some one would discover that I had been crying, and ask me what was the matter, which I dare not make known at that time, for my mother had been so opposed in her good designs, that she was discouraged, and had said, it was in vain for any one to try and worship God unless in secret. There was one sin I had committed besides swearing, that for awhile I thought could not be forgiven me. It was this: I was one day by an old saw mill, and looking round among the rotten timber, I saw a small iron staple in a rotten billet; this I coveted and took it along with me: on my way home I was convicted in my mind that this was stealing, and if my parents knew it, they would chastise me: but I was not willing to carry it back, and I was afraid of being detected at home; at first, I knew not what to do, when it was suddenly suggested to my mind, to throw it forward in the road and then find it, and say I found it: this suited my carnal mind,—I did so, but no one ever asked me about it and I forgot it,

until now it was brought to my recollection; and oh! the keen remorse and guilt I felt; I viewed it to be stealing as really as if I had taken a thousand pounds in money; and what aggravated my condemnation was, that I had a check of conscience at the time, and did not regard it, and then I might have given again that which I had robbed, (as it is written in the Scriptures, Ezekiel xviii.) but now it was lost, and therefore too late. I began to conclude that I should not get through my repentance until I was fifty or sixty years old; but I had a hope that I should find mercy then. I prayed earnestly that I might live, and I had greater hopes of living than I had of finding mercy or pardon at last, because I thought the Lord had answered my prayer in bringing my sins to my remembrance, and he perfectly knew my sincere design to repent faithfully, so that if he had any mercy for me, he would give me a good space to repent, though he did not pardon me at the end of sixty years. I began to pray more earnestly that he would bring my sins to my mind in their worst appearance, and shew me how bad I had been, and how bad I was now. Sometimes so many sins would come to my remembrance, that I could not express a suitable sorrow for them all, and would forget some of them. I thought of the number of times I had sworn profanely, and the injury it had done to others in hardening them in wickedness, as well as encouraging them to commit some sins that they would not have committed if it had not been for me; also the number of times I had

been angry and wished some curse upon some persons, and the sins they had committed in consequence of it; all these things made me despair of obtaining pardon until I was eighty years old, and I doubted much whether I should live so many years; but when I considered that my grandfather was about that age, and I had heard say, that it was hereditary for children to live to be old, whose grand-parents had lived long, and that all my grand-parents on my father's and mother's side had lived, or were like to live, to that age, and as my designs were now so good, therefore I had a faint hope of living and obtaining mercy at last; still I prayed to see the worst of my state, and paid more attention to the tempers of my mind, by comparing them to that holiness that was necessary to enjoy an holy God, I found, to my unspeakable grief and dismay, that I was altogether unholy in my nature; my sins had corrupted every part, so that there was nothing in me that was good; I was a complete sink of sin and iniquity; I looked to see if there was no way to escape, if God could not be just and have mercy on me: but no, my sins were of that nature that they had made my nature sinful; I cried out when alone, "O wretch that I am! undone for ever! all my hopes of obtaining mercy and getting to Heaven at last, are gone, and gone for ever! and it is all just and right with God." Still it is a little mercy to me that I am not killed and damned out-right; I may live here awhile, but then at last I must be damned! and to pray for myself will do no good; there is no mercy for me; I

can do nothing that will make amends for my sins, they are past and cannot be recalled: O wretch that I am! I have undone myself, and am undone for ever. Well, what shall I do now? To pray for mercy for myself is all in vain; though I feel no guilt for what I have done in praying and confessing my sins for some weeks past, yet to continue in this, now I see my end, will be a vain employment; it was just and right that I should pray and repent, that I might see my end. But now what shall I do? To sin is the worst of all, I have done too much of that already; ah! that has been my undoing. I could say,

> Let me to some wild desert go,
> And find a peaceful home;
> Where storms of malice never blow,
> Temptations never come.

But that would be too good a place for me, I deserved to be damned; but this I could not pray for. For four days I was in this state of despair, and had neglected my stated hours of secret retirement for prayer. When one Sabbath, having been reading of the sufferings of Christ, I had an impression to go in secret and pray; I went, but on the way, the thought struck me, What can you pray for? It is in vain to pray for yourself. Well, I said, (while all nature around looked more dismal to me than a mourning shroud,) I can pray for other poor sinners, that are not so bad as I am; and seeing I must be damned, I can be willing to, if God would but save

some others by that means. I thought how happy must Jesus Christ have been when he suffered for sinners. It would yield some satisfaction to me, if my misery can be a cause of happiness to others; but when I came to the place of prayer, had kneeled down and closed my eyes, with my hands uplifted toward the heavens, I saw Jesus Christ at the right hand of God looking down upon me, and God the Father looking upon him. The look of Jesus on me removed the burden of my sins, while he spoke these words, "Be faithful unto death and this shall be thy place of rest." I never had seen Jesus Christ before, nor heard his voice, nor ever had a sense of his intercession at the right hand of God for me till now; and now I could see the justice of God in shewing mercy to me for the sake of his Son Jesus Christ; and not only to me, but to all that would come to him forsaking their sins, and believing that his death and suffering were the only satisfactory sacrifice for sin. I felt a sudden sense of the impropriety of my offer to be damned for the good of others, though I had no condemnation for it; but the love of God in Christ and of Christ in God, so completely overcame me, that I was all in tears, crying, Glory! Glory! Glory! Beholding the glory of God by faith, was a rapturous sight; but soon it was suggested that I must open my eyes on creation; and feeling an ardent desire for company to encourage me in this worship of God, it appeared that on opening my eyes I should see some. I opened my eyes therefore, while still on my knees: and behold

all nature was praising God. The sun and firmament, the trees, birds, and beasts, all appeared stamped with the glory of God. I leaped from my kneeling posture, clapped my hands, and cried, Glory! Glory! Glory! Heaven and earth is full of thy glory. Then I sung,

Command his praise abroad,
And hymns of glory sing;
Jehovah is the Sovereign Lord,
The universal King.

I understood now what I had read of the children singing hosannah to the son of David, blessed is the King that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosannah in the highest! After I had sung this verse two or three times over, I began another,—putting my hands together, and saying: now, O Lord accept what I will sing to Thee,

Might I enjoy the meanest place,
Within thy house, O God of grace:
No tents of ease nor thrones of power,
Shall tempt my feet to leave thy door.

This verse I sung as my covenant with the Lord; I felt all submission, and all joy. I knew my sins were all forgiven me, and if faithful, I should reign with God in glory. I thought now I shall see no more trouble for ever, for the Lord has made the world over anew—there is nothing in it to disturb or distress me. I have got more than I ever thought of enjoying in this world; then I would stop as I was walking homeward, and again give glory to

God. I thought if I had had my eyes open, I might have seen how the Lord made the world over again. And then I thought again, if I had kept my eyes open, I should not have seen God in glory, and Jesus Christ, which was the best of all. I supposed however, that God shook the earth with a flash of lightning, while I was on my knees, and I was so overwhelmed in beholding his glory, that I did not notice it. Then I would stop as I was walking and give glory to God. Now, thought I, I will take the meanest place in the service of God here, for I have been the greatest sinner that ever lived. But I thought that whereas my brothers and sisters were better than myself, and as the present experience was a wonderful display of mercy, I feared that if I said any thing about it they might think it a vain boast of goodness; and it would seem as though I did not take the lowest place. I this frame of mind, I went on to the house, expecting to see the same change in my brothers and sisters, that I saw in all creation around. But when I entered the house and saw them, I was disappointed,—they did not appear as I expected they would. The disappointment caused sudden grief, and I retired immediately to a secret place, to give vent to my tears. Here I resolved to keep the knowledge of what I had seen and felt to myself, until I should be a man. With the poet, I could say,

> With pleasing grief and mournful joy,
> My spirit now was fill'd.

CHAPTER II.

My custom after this was to pray in some secret place, as often as I could, and to keep in a praying frame of mind at all times. To read the Scriptures, and listen to the religious conversation of the few that said any thing about religion. To watch over my tempers, and not let them arise to fretfulness and anger. To live in a sober frame of mind, and never jest nor trifle with any one. I was now about twelve years of age, and had no one to whom I dared open my mind. But without these means, I enjoyed uninterrupted peace with God,

> Awake or asleep, at home or abroad,
> I was still surrounded with my God.

I was not afraid to die, nor did I desire it; I wished only to learn of Jesus to be meek and lowly; I found I was not beyond temptation, nor could the devil harm me if I was only faithful to the Lord. My tears were tears of gratitude to the Lord for his unbounded love. I made it my practice to say no more to any one, than my business with them required; and spent the rest of my time in meditation and prayer. Nothing discouraged me, or clouded my sky, until I began to listen to Captain

B——'s conversation, and to reason upon his notions of God's decrees, and of unconditional election, and unconditional reprobation; I heard him say that God had decreed all things whatsoever cometh to pass, sin not accepted; and that God had elected from before the foundation of the world, all that ever would or could be saved; and the rest were reprobated, so that they could not be saved. Of the elect he said, they might live here in sin and wickedness all their days, until a little before the breath went out of their bodies, and then God would by his special grace convert them, and take them to Heaven. Of the reprobates he said, they might have conviction of sin, and repent and live apparently very religious lives, so that we might think them very good Christians; but God would never convert them; and though they might live moral, and seemingly religious lives, until they were eighty or ninety years old, it would only work out for them an aggravated damnation; for God had fixed them for it by his eternal decree, while the elect could not possibly commit a sin, that could in any wise endanger their salvation. If a man committed murder many times, or hung himself, and he was only one of God's elect, he would be pardoned and taken immediately to Heaven; that good works, or faith, or any thing we could do, was no condition of our salvation, for it was unconditional; that it all depended on the covenant of grace, and this covenant of grace, he represented as being wholly with

the Father and the Son, before the foundation of the world; that the Father then gave all the elect to his Son, if he would die for them, and the rest were left and reprobated.

I found the neighbours all agreed with him, for those who did not say so in plain words, would say "Aye!" without dispute, and so pass along. My father was one of those that said Aye!

The minister of our town, said that Captain B. was a man of good understanding; and I understood the minister to hold the same sentiments. He would often say these were great mysteries: but then we must believe them. He often spoke of the covenant of grace as being the foundation of all our hopes. I well remember it was said, this covenant was between the Father and the Son; and that the condition of it was fulfilled on the part of the elect by Christ; and therefore, there was no condition for the creature to fulfil. So then, all that were given to the Son in the covenant of grace, were redeemed by Christ, and saved by an effectual calling, without any works that the creature could do. As to good works, it was said, that all works of the creature before he was effectually called were wicked in the sight of God. But those, and only those, done after he was effectually called and converted, were good in the sight of God. Though we were apt to call some works good before this change was wrought. I remember they spoke of some reprobates, how they might live seemingly very religious lives until they

were eighty or ninety years old; but all this would only work out for them a more aggravated damnation.

In the course of three or four months those principles were all advanced in my hearing, and I paid particular attention to them: I had supposed that Christian men, and especially ministers, knew all about God's plan of salvation, and that I must learn of them: but on hearing these things my mind was staggered; I, however, dared not deny them, or allow myself to think that they were not so, for there was a maxim often repeated to give children a sense of their ignorance, and to make them regard the counsel of the old people, that—"young folks *think* old folks to be fools; but old folks *know* young folks to be fools;" so I thought I must be a fool in order to be wise.

I often struggled to suppress doubts that arose in my mind with respect to the consistency of such a system; but I would say to myself when alone, it must be so; those that assert it are men and Christians too, they therefore must know; and what am I, that I should doubt it: then I would desire that I might know that I was one of the elect; but I would say, how shall I know? How can I know? I read the Scriptures but I cannot find out by that. I have heard no voice saying to me, you are elected. It was suggested to my mind one day, that I must try some experiment to know this, as I read of holy men of old trying. But I said: what shall it be? I

thought of the case of Gideon's fleece of wool; and of the prophet that called for fire, and of Christ's cursing the fig-tree; but I thought if I should pray to the Lord to do any thing miraculous as a sign that I was elected; and if he should not do it, it would be a sign that I was reprobated. This I did not want to know. It was suggested to me that I should ask the Lord to cause a bush to wither and die; and if it should die, it would be a sign that I was elected. But again it was suggested that if it did not, it would be a sign that I was not elected. I dared not attempt an experiment so unlikely to succeed agreeable to my mind. At length I hit on an expedient that I was in hopes would succeed to settle the difficulty: It was by making a mark, and standing at so great a distance from it that I could not fairly jump over it without some extraordinary assistance, and yet so that I might get my feet over the mark in such a manner that it should not prove that I was reprobated. This I tried very solemnly. First, I most earnestly prayed that God would assist me. If I got my feet a little over the mark, it would be suggested to my mind, that it was no sign because I did not jump fairly over. Well, said I, it is no sign that I am reprobated, for I got my feet over the mark; if I shortened the distance so that by jumping with all my might, I could clear the mark fairly, it would be suggested, that is no sign that you are elected, for this you did without special help from God. Thus I worried myself for some time when alone, without obtaining any evidence that I was elected;

but I was careful to work the matter so that there should be no proof that I was reprobated: however, while praying to the Lord with tears and strong cries, that he would graciously shew me that I was elected, it would be suggested to my mind as one asking me, Why do you want to know that you are elected? I would reply—O Lord, if I knew that I was elected, I should have good reason to live faithful in thy service, to watch and pray, &c. Then as if an impression of mind answered, Live faithful and you shall be elect! This would so satisfy my mind for that time, that I was encouraged to double my diligence in watchfulness and prayer. Many were the sweet seasons I had in secret places: sometimes I felt such a sense of the goodness of God in saving me, a poor sinner, that with tears I would cry nothing but glory, praise, and honor be unto the Lord forever; and close my exercise with singing or repeating,

"Might I enjoy the meanest place,
Within thy house, O God of grace;
No tents of ease, nor thrones of power,
Shall tempt my feet to leave thy door."

In watchfulness I felt it a duty to guard against the rising of anger or impatience; and when tempted to fret about any thing, I strove against it by lifting my heart to the Lord in prayer; generally, I was successful in suppressing the attacks of anger, so as not to feel guilt or have cause to repent with grief for any thing I said or did on those occasions; but

when unwatchful, and a provocation to fretfulness occurred, I was so overtaken in anger that it would cause several days grief for my unwatchfulness; generally, those turns of fretfulness overcame me when I had been forgetful of my duty to watch; then I would upbraid myself with unfaithfulness, and think with how much greater severity would the blessed Jesus reprove me than he did Martha, when she fretted. I always found that forgetfulness of the duty of watching was the cause why I was overtaken in the sin of anger. Sometimes these words would sound in my mind, *What I say unto you I say unto all*, WATCH. O what a duty! O how careless I have been! I cannot expect the Lord will bless me if I do not obey him. This inattention to duty is the cause of all my faults and robs me of my happiness. At length I threatened myself with some kind of punishment if I was unmindful of duty again: so one day while alone at work, in heaping brush, I was suddenly tempted, and at the same time so careless of duty, that I had like to have been overtaken in sinful anger: I paused and considered, that all this happened to me for my unwatchfulness. I chided myself, and grieved, that notwithstanding the past reproof I had given myself, I was still forgetful of my duty. I concluded that my reproofs and resolutions were not sufficient to make me remember, and therefore I would go to my father and ask him to whip me severely. So I left my work and got about half-way to the house, when I thought that my father would ask me why I wanted to be whipped;

and if he should ask this, I must tell him the truth; then it would be known that I was determined to serve God, and if I was not elected it would be worse for me to have it known. I then turned back, and concluded to hurt myself in some way so bad, that I should remember it in future. I did so, for I took a stick of brush, and after talking to myself as my father would do to reprove me for forgetfulness, I then paid on over my head and shoulders, and as my stick was full of limbs and knots, one sharp knot pierced my forehead and cut to the bone, which caused me to give over flogging myself; but though I had hurt myself badly, I said it was good enough for me, now learn from this time to be faithful to God. The blood ran down so that I had difficulty to stop it. I went to the house to get the wound dressed—my mother asked me how I hurt me so, I told her a knot in one of the sticks of brush had hit me there. She dressed my wound, expressing pity and compassion for me, and charged me to be careful while at work among the brush, not to hurt myself. Well, thought I, when alone, mother did well not to ask me in what manner the knot hurt me, so the truth of the business is not known and I have told no falsehood. This correction, though very foolish, did me much good. I thought my attention was better fixed on my duty afterward, than before, and partly because the sore was some time in healing, that I was thereby daily and hourly reminded of it for several weeks. After this the impressions on my mind to dissuade me from prayer, were in a different manner. Often when I have been going in secret for prayer and meditation, it has bolted into my mind, *if you are elected to be saved, you will be saved; and if you are reprobated to be damned, you will be damned, and why need you pray so much?* Sometimes I prayed the more fervently, and entreated the Lord to show me if I were elected, but never obtained any answer, only, the inquiry would arise in my mind, Why do you want to know this? Often I would answer, If I could know it, it would be an encouragement to me to serve the Lord; and as often I was answered again, Serve the Lord and you will be elected. This caused me to doubt whether Capt. B. was right in saying, that God had unconditionally elected one part of his creatures from before the foundation of the world, and reprobated the rest, and that there was no condition in the covenant of electing grace. I was often perplexed with those sayings of Capt. B——'s; but on reading the Bible I found encouragement to pray and hope for the blessing of the Lord; but the conversation of Capt. B——, and all others that I then heard say any thing about religion, again disheartened and caused me to doubt whether I ought to pray at all; for I heard them say that all the prayers and good works of those whom God had reprobated, were only an abomination to the Lord, and very sinful: as I could not get any certain evidence that I was elected, I sometimes thought I was only working out a more aggravated damnation; then I would cry out, *does every body believe so?* And often this text was suggested to my mind, "*Be faith-*

ful until death, and I will give you a crown of life ;" but the next time I heard Capt. B——, or any other, talk of unconditional decrees, election, and reprobation, &c., my mind would be perplexed again. At last, after closely thinking the subject over and over, I reasoned thus—as I was a boy of only about twelve years old, it was very wrong in me to contradict what men said, therefore the things they had spoken of in my hearing were all right, only I could not see them so. Well then, said I, if it be so, what shall I do; if God has elected me I never can be lost; if God has reprobated me I never can be saved; and if I live ever so religiously until I am eighty or ninety years old, must notwithstanding be damned, and have a more aggravated damnation than I should if I were to hang myself and go to hell now; besides, if I were to hang myself, I should thereby put myself beyond the power of committing any more sin, and the Lord knows that I would suffer almost any thing, rather than commit any more sin; it is odious and grievous to my soul. But if I am elected, and it is possible that I am, then though I hang myself, I shall go straight to Heaven, and certainly I had rather be in Heaven than here; but, thought I, it is best to consider this well; then I would go over it again—I am a boy—they are men—and the minister says it too, and they must know. And some have said, an elect person may commit murder, and live in sin, till the last breath went out of his body, and then God would convert him, and take him to

Heaven. Besides I have heard them say, that sin shall work for good to the elect: while religion will work a more aggravated damnation to the reprobates. Now, to be damned, as I am, is bad enough; but to increase my misery by living long, seeing I know how to prevent it, would not be wise in me. And besides it is said, *of two evils choose the least,* and to hang myself, would only be an injury done to myself alone. But should I live until I am ninety years old, I might commit a great many sins that would injure others; so that to choose the least evil, and hang myself is rather a duty than a sin. But, said I to myself, all depends on the truth of what Capt. B. and others say; if they are right, I was either elected, or reprobated from all eternity; my fate is fixed, and nothing can be altered; and they say the Scriptures mean so, where election is spoken of—and they are men and I am a boy; and what can be more foolish than for me to contradict men, and men that are Christians too; I therefore will go immediately and hang myself, for it is the wisest thing that I can do. I then deliberately went to the barn, praying as I went, that the Lord would pardon me if it was wrong; but I felt positive that I was right, and that it was a duty, seeing I should thereby prevent a great many sins and a more aggravated damnation by this means, provided I was not elected: seeing also that it was a duty, of two evils to choose the least. While I considered a life of ninety years, when compared with eternity—O how short, and O

how aggravated the damnation must be if I should live that time, as twelve to ninety. My mind felt calm and clear in this thing; I got a rope and fixed a noose, and having looked all around to see if any one was coming to the barn, and seeing no one, I looked for a place to hang, and when at the far end of the barn floor, I saw a place where I could stand on the scaffold, hitch my rope, and swing off—just as I turned to climb on to the scaffold, I saw through the chink of the barn-door, my brother coming in great haste, my mind was suddenly in a flutter; I threw down my rope, thinking what shall I do; my brother will say, as was common for him when he came where I was—"What are you about here?" The thought struck me suddenly—look round for hen's nests; and then I can answer him by saying—I am looking for hen's nests, and so tell no lie; for I thought I would not tell a lie for all the world—but my brother came in and passed by me, and said nothing to me; which appeared strange. I then thought, he may ask me what I came to the barn for, and I shall not be able to answer him without exposing myself, or tell a lie. So I left the barn suddenly, and after I had retired a few rods toward a thick hedge of bushes, I instantly apprehended the danger I had been in; and that it was an overruling providence that brought my brother to the barn at that time. And when I got into the bushes out of sight, I fell on my knees and thanked God for this deliverance. My tears found vent, and for some time I could only

wonder, admire, and adore, a compassionate God. It was a wonder to me, that my brother should come just at that time, and that he said nothing to me; which enabled me to escape without exposing my design. Truly this was of the Lord. O what obligations I am under to reverence and serve him; for if I had gone on and put an end to my life, my soul would have been in hell. I was surprised that I had been so calm in mind, through the whole of this affair, and I began to review my reasonings through the whole procedure; and after a review I solemnly assented to the justness of them, on a supposition that those principles that I had reasoned upon were right. I therefore concluded that the principles of Capt. B——, and others, were wrong. 1st. Because they represented God as decreeing all things, and condemning many for doing what he had decreed they should do. 2. Because they made it reasonable for us to do what God had forbidden, viz. to do no evil; but I was told, "of two evils choose the least," whereas I ought not to choose either. 3d. It appeared to me that there was to be a day of judgment, wherein all were to be judged according to their works; but if God had unconditionally elected one part, and reprobated the other part from all eternity, that that was the day of judgment, and it was past, seeing he had fixed the fates of all by his decree. But if God had fixed the fates of all from all eternity, then some were condemned before they committed sin. Therefore I felt settled in my mind,

that Capt. B——'s notions were wrong—and again I gave thanks to God for my deliverance.

For some days, I was undisturbed in mind; but after a short calm, it was suggested to me, that as I was a boy, how weak and foolish it was in me, to think men did not know more than I, and that I should presume to contradict men, and Christian men too. I again began to chide myself for entertaining disrespectful thoughts of the opinions of men. It may be, I would say to myself, that they are right. Then the impression would strike me—"If you are elected to be saved, you will be saved, and if you are reprobated to be damned, you will be damned; and why need you pray so much?" This would distress me; and from this time, when the impression struck me, I would cry to the Lord for help, to be faithful in prayer; and would inquire, also—does every body believe this? Those attacks on my mind, continued to trouble me about as often as once in three weeks, for six months. When on a day, as I was riding from home, on some business for my father, which would allow me to be alone the most of the day, as I entered a wood, I began to thank the Lord that I was favored with another opportunity of being alone. That in riding through woods, I could sing hymns of praise to God; and when I discovered any one near me, I could raise my heart in silent prayer; and when I passed any person, or house, I would raise my heart in prayer for them and all that dwelt in the place. And just as I was thus anticipating a good day for prayer and

praise, the impression came with greater force than ever: "If you are elected to be saved, you will be saved, and if you are reprobated to be damned, you will be damned; and why need you pray so much?"

This impression so affected me, that my strength failed, so that I had liked to have fallen from my horse. But as soon as I had gained strength, I cried most earnestly to the Lord in these words: "O Lord, does every body believe so?" that moment an answer was suggested to my mind, as plain as it could have been spoken to my outward ears; in these words: "No! there is a people in England that teach clearly from the Scriptures, that any poor sinner, that has not committed the unpardonable sin, may be saved, if he will repent and turn to the Lord, in the time of his probation and day of grace; which God gives to every man. But if he will not obey the calls of God's Spirit, but resist and grieve him by the sins he willingly commits, then he ought to be damned."

This was good news to my mind. I knew it was from the Lord; my spirits cheered up. The forest where I was appeared glorious, as if God were there. The answer I knew to be of the Lord, because it removed the burden on my mind respecting election and reprobation, in the same manner as the burden of my sins were removed, when I first saw or knew the Lord.

I then cried to the Lord, to spare my life to find this people; and that he would be pleased to manifest to me by some sign, that I might know when I

should find them; and that they would be the people with whom I should serve the Lord here.

As the former answer was an impression on my mind, so was this; and attended with a sweet assurance that it was of the Lord; as clear as if one had spoken with an audible voice in my ear, stating to me the year and the month, that I should find this people. And that I should know them by the love they manifested in their constant practice of travelling about, from place to place, preaching, exhorting, and praying for the conversion of souls. And that they would state to me as their doctrine, that election was conditional, and not unconditional; and to prove it they would say, "If God, before the foundation of the world, passed an unconditional decree of reprobation, on a part of his creatures, how could he be just in the day of judgment, to damn them in hell for sins they committed after the foundation of the world? And what of God's mercy which is over all his works? certainly the reprobates never enjoyed any of his mercy, neither did God ever exercise any mercy to them, if he unconditionally reprobated them before the foundation of the world. Yet his mercy is over all his works. And what of the oath of God where he says: "As I live, saith the Lord, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked?" If God passed a decree of reprobation on them, before the foundation of the world, he must have had pleasure in their damnation. Therefore, the doctrine was false; for it contradicted the Scriptures, and represented God as a tyrant, and to be

worse than the devil; for the devil could not create any to be damned, nor damn any that God had created. I now saw that the doctrine was false. I then raised my voice in prayer: O Lord! shall I be a Christian? The answer was, "you shall be filled with love, the love of God shall inspire you, and then you will be called to preach, and if you are faithful, you will be the means of the conversion of many souls." I felt a fear that the devil was whispering this call to preach to my mind; for I concluded that it would be impossible for me to preach without a college education. And I had heard my father say, that he did not intend to bring up any of his children to college. Therefore, my fears arose, so as to weaken my whole frame in some degree; and I cried out again, O Lord, do not suffer the devil to deceive me! But if this impression of my mind is from Thee, and thou wilt call me to preach, when I find the people I now have a sense of, O give me a sign that I may know, when I find them, that thou dost call me! Immediately my mind received the sweet impression, "That the people I should find, did not consider a college education, as the essential qualification for a minister. Yet, that all who ministered must study to know the scriptures, and other books, whereby he may have knowledge of men and things sufficient to teach men the will of God. But, that the love of God in the soul, inspiring it with a zeal for God, in the salvation of their fellow men, was the essential qualification. I thought, this is agreeable to the call

of the Apostles and ancient ministers of whom I have read. And farther, the impression continued to show me, that I should be invited to preach in a house that deacon K. then lived in, for the first time, and that Mr. P. WATKINS (who was about as old as my father, and lived in a wicked and intemperate habit, in the town,) would be there, and would be awakened to a sense of religion, by my preaching, and would be converted to the Lord, and that I should be a means of the conversion of several of Capt. FLETCHER'S family ; and many would be encouraged to serve the Lord if I were faithful ; but those who held to unconditional election and reprobation, would oppose me. And I should then be invited to the house, where Mr. R.W. then lived. And after a little time, I should travel in different parts,—east, west, north, and south. From the age of twenty-five or six, I should travel until I was thirty-six, and have good success if I was faithful. Year after year, the points of compass where I should travel were impressed on my mind. And on the year I was to be thirty-six years old, I was to travel in a south-westerly direction about one hundred miles from where I then was ; and that I should meet with something like death that year. How, and what was to happen to me that year, was not clear to my mind ; I prayed to the Lord to shew me if I were to die that year ; but I had no answer ; I prayed again, and received no answer ; I was afraid to ask a third time, lest I should offend and grieve the good Spirit. But feeling

anxious to have something more clear on my mind relative to it, I altered my mode of expression, and said, O Lord, will all be well ? Immediately the answer was, " If you are faithful to the Lord, all shall be well." I cried out, Glory be to thy holy name, O Lord ; and then sung,

Come sound his praise abroad,
And hymns of glory sing.

My soul was happy, and my mind clear. The Scripture plan of salvation, as far as I then viewed it, was sweet and glorious. My enraptured soul seemed to leap within me. While riding through the forest, it was glory all around me, and glory in my soul. It was in the forepart of the day, I again sung,

Lord ! in the morning thou shalt hear
My voice ascending high ;
To Thee will I direct my prayer,
To Thee lift up mine eye.

From this time, I enjoyed a clear sense of the plan of salvation through Christ, or (as I would express it, to have it according to my own views when a child) the plan of salvation through the MEANS *ordained* by God, in the hands of a Mediator, which was Christ Jesus. From this time I was no more troubled with suggestions that if I was elected to be saved I should be saved, and if I was reprobated to be damned I should be damned, and why need you pray so much ? No ; from this time I paid but little attention to what Capt. B—— said. However, I re-

solved to study the scriptures, and learn all I could, that when I found this people I might be the better prepared to serve the Lord.

My custom was to say but little in company, and to be very private in my devotions; and never to jest or laugh at folly, but to turn away from all foolish talking and jesting. For about three years I continued in this way. Many called me deacon, because I was serious and candid in what I said.—This sometimes grieved me, because I conceived that they committed sin by making light of what I viewed to be a sacred office. And though my father never made light of religion of any order, yet he would call me deacon. And sometimes when customers came to trade, if they could not agree in the price of the article, he would say, "Come, let us leave it to the deacon," and then call me up to judge of the price of the article. Others when they had called me deacon, disputed one with the other in order to pester me, (for I generally said little or nothing) that I was not a deacon, but I was an old bachelor; for, said they, he is so still and sober, that the girls will never have any thing to say to him. Then they would laugh as though it pleased them to make sport of me. Nothing, however, disturbed me in this; but the sense I had of the sin they committed in treating seriousness and the sacred office, with lightness. The seasons I had in secret, were truly times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. My great desire was, to live to the glory of God while I

was young, and prepare in youth for manhood; that if I lived I might realize all that had been intimated to me.

Nothing occurred until I was fifteen years old (except hard times at the close of the war,) that is worthy of narration. My father and two uncles that had been repeatedly called out into the service returned, without any injury, except one of my uncles, who had been wounded when the enemy attacked them in their trench; two other uncles that had been in the war, died with the dysentery. And now on the return of those that survived, there was much to be said of what they had seen and heard. I could listen to some of those stories, but if the person mixed his narration with cursing and swearing, I would turn away. I made it my practice to leave all profane company, and chose rather to spend my time alone. I earnestly longed for religious company, but found none. I heard at one time of (what was called) a reformation, about five miles off, among some children; I rejoiced at this news, and the first time I went into that place, I made bold to inquire of a young woman, if there were any boys in the place that were religious—I said that I heard there were—she made light of it, and began to laugh at me, for thinking that any young people were religious. When she laughed and spoke so disdainfully of religion in little boys, I was grieved, and left her: and as I met with such poor success in finding out those who were religious, I thought I would ask no more about it, but find them out, if

possible, without; and seeing a boy that had come to mill from the neighborhood, that looked serious, I thought to flatter him away to play with me. I did so, in order to find out whether he was religious or not; but we had not been ten minutes together when he swore wickedly; this grieved me more than common, because I had flattered myself with hopes that I should find one that was religious, but now was disappointed. I left him suddenly. I was too much grieved to say one word; I was grieved because so good a God was despised and neglected by those who received daily blessings from his hand.

I had reason to believe that all who knew me loved me, for I abused none. But though none quarrelled with me, yet they would call me deacon, and laugh at my seriousness, until at length I began to think that my reservedness was an occasion for them to sin; for there seemed to be no christians that lived so sober as I did: I had thought that it was wrong in them to jest and joke as they did, and dare not indulge in it myself, because it made my mind unfit for prayer; and it had been my practice to keep a tender heart, for I read that a broken and contrite heart was a sacrifice that God would not despise; therefore when I prayed, I was not satisfied unless I could weep and shed tears. This was my rule to judge of my heart, that it was right with God. But it now began to appear to me, that my seriousness caused others to commit sin, in laughing at me. I thought if they would not call me deacon, that to laugh at me would be no crime, for I deserved no-

thing better; but to connect the office of deacon with my seriousness, and make a jest of me because of the office, was a grief to me. Here the enemy took advantage of me, and suggested to me, that the only way to prevent this evil, was to jest and joke a little, and that would be no great sin, if any, provided I did not go father in it than the professors of religion around, and especially those that partook of the sacrament; and if I did not do this, I should be guilty of making others sin, which would also be a sin in me. Now my mind was brought into straits again. I reasoned from what I heard others say; some said it was wrong to do any thing whereby any one was induced to sin. I made the application to myself; I was doing wrong in living so soberly, as I supposed that thereby some made a jest of the office of deacon. Again I heard it said, that we could not live without sin, though Jesus Christ had said, "Be ye perfect as your father which is in Heaven is perfect;" but some said this perfection could not be in this life. I concluded that if we could not live without sin, yet it was our duty not to indulge in any sins, except those that were small and calculated to prevent greater sins. So I understood the opinions of many who were called good Christians: and I felt an inclination to believe it, for I was in difficulty and knew not how to avoid sinning by being the occasion of others sinning in laughing at my seriousness. Often I heard it said, that young people must have their civil recreations; and the minister, who

was one of the best of men, also said it was no sin for young people to get together, and have a fiddler, and dance *civilly*. And I also thought, charitably, that though I had viewed it to be a sin, yet it might be right in them to laugh and jest, though it was not right in me, because I found it was forbidden in the Bible; and also when I indulged in it, it hardened my heart, and unfitted me for prayer. But I must say, that I thought it was a powerful reason to justify me in jesting and joking, yet I thought the reasons against jesting and joking were more powerful; but my inclination sided with the weaker reasonings; and after I had determined not to indulge in any gross sins, I determined to jest and joke and laugh as much as other Christians did, so as thereby to prevent others from committing sin in calling me deacon; and the trite saying "of two evils choose the least," was among the rest of the arguments to dissuade me from seriousness.

CHAPTER III.

In those times I had not seen the distinction between moral evil and natural evil, therefore what now appears to be a trite saying, and no ways reasonable when applied to moral evils, yet then it appeared a reasonable duty, of two evils to choose the least. But I must confess, that then I had impressions of mind not to refrain from seriousness, but to persevere in sobriety and meekness; and those impressions I knew to be of the Lord, and those to the contrary I knew to be of the devil, so that I have no reasonable excuse for backsliding from the Lord. But like all other backsliders, I pleaded an excuse in the court of my own conscience.

Though I had no excuse, neither can I now excuse those who laughed at me, nor those who taught principles subversive of pure religion, such as the doctrine that we could not live without sin, and of two evils to choose the least, without discriminating between moral and natural evils, which are subversive of true piety towards God, and sound honesty among men; but I can pray, "Father, forgive them, for they (many of them) know not what they do."

I began to jest and joke, and it was not long before I was admired for my wit; and was considered

as good a fellow as any of the joking class. I was no more called deacon, nor any longer deserved the appellation; but I was still called a fine boy, a promising youth. Every one loved me; and as I had a pleasant voice for singing, and learned a variety of songs, I pleased all companies, for I was unto them as a lovely song, of one that hath a charming voice. Though I refrained from all gross sins, and allowed myself in nothing but what was said to be civil, and even said to be no sin by the great part of professors of religion; yet this so unfitted me for prayer, that it was a torment to my mind.

As piety towards God and a serious religious life, were disgusting to the generality of people, and made me but an object of their ridicule, whereby they committed sin, I concluded that at any rate, I must defer my religious exercises until I was a man; and then I could seclude myself from all company; or if in company, it would be no disgrace for me to profess religion. However, I resolved to study, and inform my mind in those things best calculated to make me useful in society; for I could not believe in hermitage. And as my mind was not fit for prayer, I less frequently read my Bible, except those parts treating of wars. In reading over accounts of ancient battles I was delighted. From reading the scripture account of wars, I began to read histories of wars in Europe and America. Sometimes I would spend almost whole nights in reading. I thought, I will be a warrior, and command an army. I will be a general.

This was my firm resolution. About this time the insurrection broke out in Massachusetts. In the year 1786 I was fifteen years old, and began to listen with attention to the politics of the day. It was said that the rich men wanted to bring the state into lordships; and therefore the Governor and counsel had levied a tax so heavy on the people, that there was not sufficient money in circulation to pay it. Some of the best accountants made out that all the money in circulation, would not more than pay one-sixth part of the tax; and lands must be sold at auction for one-hundreth part their value to make it out, and I presume not one in fifty could pay his tax without distressing him. So I understood the subject and so the talk ran. All turned out to stop the courts from sitting. My father was opposed to government, and took an active part in stopping the court. Then arose General Daniel Shays. He took the chief command. About seven thousand rallied around his standard in the counties of Hampshire and Worcester, while government sent out General Lincoln with about four or five thousand to quell the insurgents. They manœuvered about from the last of November until February, when Shays disbanded, or rather deserted his army, with orders to disband and go home. Meanwhile a party were raised in Berkshire county, under General P., of about two or three hundred, and they went about to disarm the people, while the most of our men that could be spared with their arms and ammunition, were with Shays. However, Major W. and Capt. C. with others, beat up for volunteers

My father and brother turned out with them, and left me home to send on provisions. They marched around through several towns, until they had got about three hundred soldiers, and then marched to meet Gen. P. in the town of Lee. They drew up in line of battle. Captain C. and my father had the command of the prisoners they had taken; and putting them into a house out of which they had moved a loom, to make room, they took the yarn beam, and cloth beam, and laid them on a sleigh, pointing them toward the court party (as they were called) to frighten them into submission. This had the desired effect; for the court party having two or three field pieces, they formed their line at so great a distance, that small arms could not reach them: and there was a valley to cross, so that while our men were advancing to injure them, they could rake them with their field pieces; but beholding with their spy glasses from a distance the two loom beams, they concluded one was a six pounder, and the other a small field piece. Upon this they proposed terms of peace—that each party should return home and be quiet. After these terms were agreed upon, our men disbanded and came home. Just after this we heard that Shays had fled to Canada, and his army was disbanded. General Lincoln marched up to Berkshire. In passing through our town, they took all they could of those who had been out with major W. And as my father lived about a mile from the main road, and the bye roads were drifted with snow, so it was difficult to come to his house; therefore many neighbors

resorted there for safety, while I was kept on the watch, with an old horse, an old saddle, and an old ragged great-coat belted around me. I went out among the court party, and returned in the evening, having discovered their situation. I reported that sixteen were billetted in one house, and had stacked their arms in the entry, that we might easily take them prisoners without firing a gun, or making any alarm. Immediately those at my father's held a council of war, (as they called it.) But my mother plead so hard against their plan of taking them, that they gave up to the council of a woman for once, and it was well for us all. The next morning my brother went one way, and I another, to reconnoitre; he was taken prisoner. But he played with the guard; they pricked him with their bayonets; he made fun of it: in fine, he played the simpleton so completely, that they believed him to be some half-witted fellow, and so let him go.

After the troops had passed through, orders were issued that all who would come in and take the oath of allegiance, might live in quiet. My father was sent for. He appeared before the court-martial. They inquired of him about the loom-beams, but as they had no proof against him, or any one, and they could not make him criminate himself, they discharged him, after he had taken the oath. Thus ended the Shay's war, (as it was called.) But as election day drew on, the minds of the people were all so turned upon a new Governor, that they had a great majority for Gov. Hancock, and as the tax that had been the cause of the insurrection had not been collected, the new

Governor and Assembly, &c., made a law to have it paid in soldiers' notes; those notes could then be obtained for half a dollar on the pound; a pound was three dollars and thirty-three cents. My father's rate was so large, (though a moderate farmer,) that he paid out eleven dollars for soldiers' notes to pay his tax: by this I understood that his tax was between forty and fifty dollars.

This affray was one cause of increasing my study of history of wars; and determined my mind to be a general. In order to this, I must possess learning, courage, and a perfect command of my passions. The more I studied, the more clearly I saw that I must, (in order to possess true courage) subdue the passion of anger, or hatred, to an enemy. That courage in an officer, must consist in a calm, composed mind, attended with a firm resolution to prosecute the principles on which the war was waged. The courage raised by a fit of anger, did not deserve the name of courage; but rather a madness, or presumptuous frenzy. I conceived when I read histories of battles, that I could see the officers marching on to the attack with an unruffled mind, having nothing but the principles in view, for which they fought. I had read that "anger rests only in the bosom of fools," and I concluded that no fool was fit for an officer. From the Scriptures I learned that no war was right, but that which was purely defensive; and in order to possess true courage, and a right frame of mind, I must at any rate, believe myself in the right cause. Though I viewed it possible for both sides to believe

themselves in the right, yet but one side was really so; therefore it was duty in old times, on going to war, to offer *peace offerings*, that is to offer terms of peace on reciprocal principles. And it was as clearly a duty now, as in old times. But how I should obtain true courage, and a command of my passions, so as to face danger, with an unruffled mind, without true religion, I knew not. This therefore was a means of preventing me from indulging in gross sins. I aimed to live morally, though I knew I was not pious. I believed it was possible for a man to cast off all fear of God and man, so that he could brave danger with an unruffled mind; but that kind of courage I viewed to be madness and folly, and not worthy of the name of courage; because Christ had said, "I will forewarn you, whom you shall fear," &c., and it was folly to cast off the fear of the Lord. I have read of a General who was challenged to fight a duel, and he refused; some of his friends said to him, "You will loose your honor;" he said, "I will secure my honor by my disgrace." They asked how he could do that, when he would be charged with cowardice; he said, "I profess I am not afraid to charge up to the cannon's mouth, in the service of my God and country; but I want courage to storm hell." I understood from the history that this General was a Christian and a man of true courage. I heard also much said of the American officers. Washington was a hero; his courage was an honor to him and the nation whom he served. Putnam did well, but was rather presumptuous. Lincoln and Gates, and many others, deserved

well of their country. But of Arnold, we could not say well; his courage was a frenzy, a mere madness, that had no principle, but passion to guide it. Such courage may do good service when it has one superior in office to direct the use of it. And therefore we can account for the honor he seemed to acquire in storming Quebec, under the command of Gen. Montgomery; and his success in taking Gen. Burgoyne, under the command of Gen. Gates; but when left to the command of West-Point, in the absence of Gen. Washington, he could feed his fretful, malicious temper, by selling himself and all the American army to the British, for no other motive than revenge on the continental Congress, and to obtain that promotion and fortune among the British which he judged himself entitled to; and which had been refused him by the Congress. Such conceit of one's own merit, argues a vain mind, that never can possess true courage. Therefore, I concluded that some modesty was essential to true courage, and that in order for me to possess it, I must have a perfect command of my passions, and this I could not obtain without true religion. I read some philosophical books, and contracted an anxiety for the knowledge of the science of physic. But my advantages were small. I despaired of making a proficiency in any science without proper books, and some one to teach me. But history and biography were my favorite studies; these I pursued with delight. Some romantic pieces pleased me much, and I thought myself to be about as good as the professors of religion in general. And though I

sometimes felt distress about my future state, yet I hoped that God would show mercy, seeing I was not worse than those that were called very good Christians; many of whom were highly pleased with my songs. As to my former exercises, and especially the impressions I had about finding a religious people in a future day, and of being a preacher, I thought but little of them; for sometimes I concluded that as I was a child, I thought as a child; but as I became a man I must put away childish things; so I treated the former impressions I had as childish notions. But the thoughts of being a man of courage, and honor, occupied my whole attention for a considerable time. I was constantly devising schemes to lead on my men to a successful attack, and to fortify them from danger, or dispose of them to save their lives; and also how I could best inspire them with true courage. I concluded that I would not allow of any swearing, nor immoral behavior in any under my command; that in order to prevent it, I would keep employed myself, and my men also, in constantly exercising them. In order to this, I must have a fund of wisdom, so as to be ready at all times to command, and divert the attention of the soldiers, that they should not have time to mutiny. I was determined to acquaint myself with physic and surgery, so that I could administer to the relief of the sick or wounded.

Those war-like notions, however, wore off after awhile, and I began to go into company, and attend to (what were called) civil recreations. But a fit

of sickness checked my career. I was given over by my physician to die. This, however, did not frighten me; for the night before I was given over, I had a conviction of my folly, in treating my former impressions as childish notions. I therefore confessed to the Lord my folly in this thing, and prayed for pardon, and again I felt the forgiving love of God, so that I was not afraid to die. And that moment also, I had an impression that I should live, at least until I was thirty-six years of age. So that when the doctor came next morning, and intimated that he could do no more for me, and desired a counsel of doctors, I looked up upon him, and said, Doctor, I shall not die with this sickness; you need not be discouraged, I shall live. He set down by me smiling, and said, you have good spirits; I will do the best I can. My father turned to the wall, putting his handkerchief to his face; the rest of the family left the room. I then perceived, as they afterwards told me, that they had despaired of my recovery. However, in four days I began to amend, and in thirty-five days I was able to walk across the room. But all that inspired me with confidence, was a sense of pardon, and a full conviction that my former impressions were of the Lord. I was so fully convinced of this, that a few months after, while in conversation with a tailor, who was making me a suit of clothes, our conversation turned upon the genius of the young men of our acquaintance, and what occupations they would follow; I very seriously said to him that I should be a travelling minister. I perceived that I had exposed myself; and immediately

turned off the conversation with a piece of drollery. But he laid up the expression, so that not long after, when it was known that I was under conviction, and it was thought I should join the Methodists, he would say, Yes, he will be a Methodist preacher, for I heard him say that he should be a travelling preacher.

After I recovered my health, I began again to go into company. I thought to prove mirth, and see what it was. Our minister said that dancing was no sin. Many church members would dance, and were greatly delighted to see the young people dance. My father, however, was opposed to such frolics, as he called them. After I had attended a few balls, as they were called by the polite sort of people, a minister came to my father's who called himself a Methodist: This was the first time I had ever heard of the name or sect. He desired to preach at our house, saying he had been directed there by Esquire W. whom we knew, and as it was on Saturday, my mother and I thought it would be proper; but informed him that as my father was absent and would not be at home before night, we would choose to have his consent. The preacher was sitting on his horse by the door all this while; but we invited him to alight and take some refreshment, as we had just dined. He did so; but expressed a fear that my father might not be willing to have preaching in his house. We informed him that we were sure he would. I said, sir, if you are not an Universalist, I am sure my father will be willing to have you preach here. He said, I am no Universalist. He asked me if I would notify

the people. I pledged myself that if my father gave his consent to have the meeting in his house, I would notify all the neighborhood that night and the next morning. So he consented to have his horse put up. As I was leading him to the barn, I thought truly this man is a man of God ; and I will give his horse the best in the barn,—which I did. When my father came home, he talked with the preacher, and gave consent to have him preach. I gave notice, and a large congregation came together. I heard for the first time, a doctrine that I could understand. There was no contradiction, but he could prove his doctrine from scripture and reason. Also in the family, and in prayer, his spirit seemed to be all love. I was much affected, though I dared not show it. All agreed that he was a good preacher. The Methodist preachers continued to come and preach at my father's, until a number were awakened and converted, and they proposed to form a class. Nothing had been said against them ; but now the old professors began to express fears that they were not right. I perceived that those who were awakened and converted through the instrumentality of the Methodists, and had joined the Congregationalists, were considered as good Christians ; but those that joined the Methodists were said to be deluded. I could not understand this judgment to be just. However, though I said but little, yet I told no one of what I had experienced ; but as I was now a young man, and had some ideas of honor, I thought it best to be prudent, and so conduct myself that I might keep friends on all sides. In order to

this, I must associate with young people in what was called civil recreations, or balls. I think I attended four before I was fully convinced that they were sinful, and that if I attended them, I should not only corrupt my soul with sin, worse than it was then ; but forever prevent myself from obtaining those qualifications that would make me truly honorable and profitable to civil and religious society. So I stated my objections to balls, to some young gentlemen of my acquaintance. I said that I thought our method of dancing, an employment beneath the dignity of a young man that had a soul ; and that I could not believe an all-wise God ever made a reasonable soul to be delighted with dancing about a floor at the squeaking of a fiddle. None but fools, in my opinion, could count it a delightful exercise. But I believed, those who had reasonable souls, ought to employ their whole time to gain wisdom, and learn those sciences that were calculated to make us useful to society, and that would also make us truly happy. I then proposed to them that we should meet at suitable seasons, to propound questions in the mathematics, and answer them as well as we could, and by this means cultivate our minds.

The religious dance we read of in Scripture, I observed, seems to be no more than beating time to a tune. When Miriam led forth the women in the dance, they sung or chanted the song of Moses, and their dancing consisted in beating time by marching to the tune. But what is that to do in fiddling and shuffling to the tune of " Peggy and Molly," or "fire on the mountains, run boys run."

The Shakers often danced to those tunes, but this they called labor. If they had been great sinners, they must dance and sweat, to mortify the flesh, and the deeds of the body. Their dancing was to them a religious duty. The Indians, also, had their war dances, and danced in some of their religious ceremonies; but what had this to do with our civil recreations? We had no intention to worship God in the exercise of dancing.

To prove dancing right, it was not only said to be a civil recreation, but they said it was better for young people to do that, than to do worse, and "of two evils to choose the least." And then to crown all argument in favor of dancing, they said we could not live without sin in this world; and this dancing they viewed to be a harmless sin, if it was any sin at all. Some said it was no sin. But I perceived that those persons would not allow that we could do any thing, even to pray without committing sin. It seemed that all they did was sin, except dancing. In this way the dancing recreation was defended by professors of religion. For some time I was troubled with this sinful vanity; and I found it difficult to excuse myself. I loved my young companions, and they loved me. I found it, however, easier to convince them that dancing was wrong, than some professors of religion. However, I attended meetings, and paid attention to the word preached, that I might know what state I was in, and what I should do to be saved. The preaching of the Congregationalists or Baptists, appeared in my mind very contradictory; their notion of unconditional election, &c. I could not believe. The preaching of the Methodists appeared scriptural and reasonable. I always found their preaching to edify me. But if I became a Methodist, I should be sure to lose the good will of some professors of religion, though I had no fear of losing the good will of the Methodists themselves, for they appeared to manifest more love to such poor sinners as I was, than other professors manifested to each other.

In attending the Methodist meeting I soon found I rendered myself suspicious among some of the Congregationalists, and especially because I approved of what they preached; but if I found fault with them, I pleased some mightily. One man, a Congregationalist, of whom my father had a high opinion, always had something to say against the Methodists. He told us, that he had heard that the preachers were hired by the King of England, and sent over to this country to proselyte the people; so as to bring back the states to be British colonies again; that the preachers received four dollars per head, for every convert they made, and this was paid to them by the British Consul, residing in New York. The story served to render the Methodists a suspicious people among us. Mr. Sk——n gave his opinion with a positive air and accent. He could tell of nothing erroneous in them that he had seen; but their doctrines he complained of strenuously. And his method of proving their doctrines erroneous, was, to assert possitively that they were false, and then assign (for an

argument) the opinions of Dr. PINKINS, who was his favorite minister. Then he would fall to praising Dr. P. and many other ministers of his acquaintance, and tell us in what colleges they were educated, and how many sermons some of them had preached from one text, which was a certain evidence, in his opinion, of a learned and great man. My father for some reason got his mind set against the Methodists, yet not as others had; for though he neglected their preaching he would not speak evil of them.—One of my sisters and her husband, had joined the Methodists. And one of the neighbors, of whom my father had a high opinion, was converted and joined them. This man was a nursing father, and his wife a nursing mother to me. When he first experienced religion, he came to my father's, and with a solemn pleasant look, said he had come to make confession for the injury he had done him.—My father appeared surprised, and said, Why? Mr. HUBBARD, you never injured me in your life. He replied, I don't know that I ever injured you in person or character, but I am sensible I have in your children, by not setting a good example before them. I am afraid that through my light and trifling conversation, and my dancing, they have been encouraged in those sinful practices. But for this, I ask your forgiveness. My father was too full of tears to speak for some time. I was present until he stated the cause for which he came to ask forgiveness. I then retired to find a place to vent my tears in private. I thought of all the men in the world, I have the least cause to find fault with Mr. HUBBARD. I

returned as soon as I could suppress my tears, and in time to hear my father say he never thought Mr. H. had any evil design in any thing he had ever done to him or his children; and he did not believe that one of his children would accuse him of any wrong in any thing he had done to them. Mr. H. said, I did not suppose that you or your children were prejudiced against me, or that you would judge me to be guilty of any gross immorality, but I have been convicted by the Spirit of the Lord, and the word of his grace, that my manner of life has been contrary to the Gospel, and that if you or your children should follow it, it would be your undoing; and I thought it my duty to come and take out of the way the stumbling block I have laid before you.

This was loud preaching to me, and confirmed my mind that dancing, as well as all light and trifling conversation, was wrong. Now I began to see where I was, and what I had been when they called me deacon, and how I lost the enjoyment of the love of God, by casting off seriousness and restraining prayer. I thought I would have given the whole world, if it had been mine, in order to enjoy again what I did when I was twelve years old. But I thought some of the impressions I had then, were delusive and enthusiastical; such as finding a particular people, and being called to preach. I was confident that I was not fit to be a minister. It was nonsense for me to harbor the thought, who had broken all the solemn promises to serve the Lord that I had ever made; I was no christian, and it was a doubt whether I ever could be one. I con-

cluded I would keep private the exercises of my mind. But having paid attention to a young woman whom I intended to make my wife, I began to think I would not marry her unless she acquiesced in my ideas of being religious; therefore to prove her, I made known to her my thoughts of being religious; and when I stated to her the line of conduct I purposed to pursue in life, viz. To withdraw from all trifling company, and to dance or sing songs no more; but when I am married, to pray in my family and live a life of honesty and seriousness. I then asked her if she would be ashamed of me, and if such a life would be disagreeable to her. She said no, by no means. It had been impressed on her mind also, for some time, that she ought to break off singing songs, and as to dancing, she never wanted to practice that. This gave me great joy, for I had been fully determined, if my proposals did not suit her mind, I would leave her for ever. After this we often spoke to each other when together, of our desires to serve the Lord. But I thought to keep my exercises from the knowledge of all others, until after I was married, and then it would be no disgrace to make it known.

CHAPTER IV.

The opposition that arose against the Methodists was maintained with great zeal for the established order of religion; and a zeal that was becoming men that designed to be religious in the New England fashion; and I had no doubt but the opposers were sincerely afraid that their order would be injured by the Methodists. I wanted to be a Congregationalist, and to be respectable. But I wanted the love and seriousness of the Methodists. I loved their preaching and doctrine; but these seemed to be detested by the Calvinists. Therefore, I could not be a Congregationalist and believe the Methodist doctrine. And for some time, I strove to find some error in those doctrines, and disputed the point with some of the Methodists; but after awhile, I obtained such knowledge of the Scriptures, that I not only fully believed their doctrines, but concluded to oppose them no more. Nevertheless, how to please the standing order, and maintain my character among all, was a difficult task. I concluded to say nothing, for or against the Methodists; Balak-like I would neither curse them nor bless them. This neutrality I found would not do for me. Though the minister

of our town would neither curse them nor bless them, and in this he was said to be very cunning; but the moment I left off opposing them I was suspected. I could trifle and be as vain as any one, and no one but the Methodists would chide me for it. I soon found that trifling and jesting would serve as a substitute for opposing the Methodists, would render me respectable among some professors, and remove their suspicions of me. So when among them I could make merry, and when among the Methodists I would be serious. But in a few months, I found this was mere trifling with religion. And concluded that I could no longer indulge in merriment, because in so doing I could not retain a spirit of prayer. So then, how to be a Presbyterian, and pray like a Methodist, I could not tell; for I desired earnestly to join the standing order, and yet hold the doctrines of the Methodists, and live as soberly and seriously as they did. And if I could do this, it would be an advantage to the Congregational-order. But how to obtain the pardon of my sins, and a witness that I was truly converted, was now the subject of my great concern. I reasoned thus: if religion be a reality, and not a fiction, there is such a thing as knowing it. But if it cannot be known, it is not worth my notice. The Word of the Lord tells me, that religion is a reality; and the best of men have said they know this by experience. But the devil has insinuated that religion is such a mysterious and holy thing, and also, that such are the corruption and depravity of man in this life, that he

cannot enjoy religion, or obtain a knowledge of it. But those professors that live in sin, and have nothing to distinguish them from many other sinners but their bare profession, will also roundly declare they do not know, and cannot know their sins forgiven. But they say they have a comfortable hope. Now, said I to myself, which shall I believe, God or the devil, and ignorant professors? If I believe God, I must show it by my works, and renounce the devil, and learn a proper distinction between good and evil; and know how to choose the good and refuse the evil, is the important lesson I must now learn. If there be such a thing as religion it must be designed to qualify us for Heaven,—while sin qualifies us for hell. Upon examination, I found I was a sinner. I felt the wrath of God a just reward for all sin. And his wrath I should justly feel to all eternity, if I continued to jest and trifle as I had done. Sometimes a sense of the sinfulness of jesting and joking would weigh down my spirits. If I opened my mind to any one, by stating my fears that there was no mercy for me, some would say, why need you be troubled? you are no great sinner; you never murdered any one; you are not worse than others. But this was no comfort to my mind, for I would say—though I have not murdered any one of my fellow men; yet my sins have murdered the Lord Jesus Christ. If I spoke to one that was a Methodist, he would exhort me to look to God by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and not rest until I knew my sins were forgiven. But I desired to be a Congregationalist, and to be a true Christian too. But

how to make this out I knew not; for when I associated with them, I lost my conviction; but when I went to hear the Methodists, I became alarmed again. The Congregationalists taught me to wait God's time, that I could not obtain deliverance until the day of his power. The Methodists taught me, that now is God's time, and now is the day of his converting power; that man is a moral agent, and that God deals with him as such, that God did not make us reasonable beings to deal unreasonable with us; that if it is presumptuous for a man to say that he shall have a crop of grain without ploughing or sowing; it is more so, to expect a blessing to our souls without using the means God hath appointed; that if a man be sick, it would be absurd to expect a cure without using proper means; it is more so, to expect heavenly balm to our wounded soul without repenting and turning to God. "It is true," said they, "that God can save without means, but there is no promise for us to expect it. It is true God has power to annihilate all the souls of men, as easily as he could create them, but if Scripture be true, he will not do it." "Without all, peradventure," said one, "God could force men into seriousness; and he that commanded light out of darkness, might take the sinner in his arms, and carry him even against his will, into that banqueting-house, the banner whereof is love. Yea, he might set men's souls, as the workman doth his clock. He might treat us as he doth brute beasts: but if the word of God be true, he will not. It is folly to accuse God with dealing irresistibly with his creatures, and then condemn them, for doing what they could not possibly avoid, or to save one irresistibly, and not save all. And to represent God as having made a world of intelligent creatures, for *his* glory, and by a decree ensnare them in sin and filth that he might have the pleasure of tormenting the greater part of them in eternal fire, is worse than atheism. For it would be better to believe in no God, than to believe in one that exerted almighty power to create beings to glorify and enjoy him; and then exert the same almighty power to damn them in hell, as though his power were exerted against itself."

The Methodists said, that "God made nothing in vain; that having made his creatures moral agents, he had therefore designed them for his service. No man lighteth a candle and putteth it under a bushel: but sitteth it on a candle-stick, that it may give light to all in the house. So God never made a rational soul, and left it without the means of moral improvement. No man ever made a house for the pleasure of setting it on fire, and seeing it burn down. He that makes a diamond ring does not intend it for a hog's snout. He that makes a rich carpet does not intend it for a house-mop or dish-clouts. And shall we think God more imprudent than man? Shall we imagine that God has less foresight than common tradesmen? Truly, if we draw conclusions from some men's representation of God, we must gather no less from what they say and do, than that they imagine God to be more brutish than the most carnal

wretch living, who never would toil for gold and silver, for the pleasure of throwing it into the sea. For they profess to believe that God has given them a more refined spirit than irrational creatures have; and yet they employ that spirit to no higher use than beasts do their instinct. Shall God give us an exalted soul that can eat angels' food, and shall we, like the prodigal, fill our bellies with husks? Shall the grace of God that bringeth salvation, appear to all men; and God design that it should have no higher use than to teach and instruct us how to feed and clothe a poor corruptible body, and how to wallow in sin as the swine in the mire? I cannot conceive how a Christian man can have such thoughts of God, unless he is laboring under a strong delusion." I thought if a man denied himself to be a moral agent, he did in fact deny his accountability to God, and rendered himself brutish. I doubted whether such an one could be allowed to humble himself like AGAR, who said, "I am more brutish than any man." But to be consistent with just conclusions from his sentiments, he should degrade himself by saying: "I am a brute and no man."

When I went among the Congregationalists, they were engaged to fortify their principles against the doctrines of the Methodists. They said at first, that man was not a moral agent; but that he was only a natural agent; that God had decreed all things, but then they were willing only to mean by this, that God foreknew all things. For they said—God's foreknowledge and decrees were the same

thing: or that he could not have foreknown if he had not decreed, but their great argument to prove it, was their ignorance. Our minister would say, This is a great mystery. It is an unfathomable ocean: we cannot comprehend it: but it is so: we must believe it. One man, Mr. G———, said in a conference meeting, that if a man had a system that he could see through, so as to account for the reasonableness of it, it was a certain sign that man was wrong. But if a man had a system that he could not see through, or shew its consistency, it was a certain sign that man was right. This notion of Mr. G——, obtained the assent of all his brethren. I said nothing *pro* or *con*, but I felt sorrow, that so honorable a religion had nothing better than confusion for its support.

In the spring, after I was of age, I proposed to go into the western part of New York state, and look me out some new land to settle upon. I mentioned this to her whom I intended to make my wife. She approved of it; and her brother volunteered to accompany me. So we set out (to seek our fortunes) on a pedestrian tour of three or four hundred miles, in a circuitous route, to find good land. At last we came to Norway, near the Royal Grants. There we thought to settle. We took some land, and got in six acres of wheat, and returned home late in the fall of 1792. And after arranging all things according to the rules and customs of Massachusetts, I was married on the 10th day of January, 1793.

In all this time I had similar exercises of mind, as

in months before. Sometimes I was melted into tenderness, and for awhile I was serious and solemn. Then again I would joke and jest. My serious turns gave my joking turns an appearance of greater wit; and some people formed an opinion that my seriousness was all feigned, with a design to give a zest to my jokes. This troubled me at times; it was not so; but I only knew my design in it; yet I could not justify myself in these measures to hide my Methodistical opinions; for the doctrines of the Methodists I cordially approved, and the spirit of humility and love so manifestly governing them, inspired in me a decided opinion in their favor. But for me to be a Methodist, when they were so few in number, and so opposed by even good men, and the finger of scorn pointed at them by some who I feared were only hypocrites, yet high professors of religion, while the wicked, by this contempt of professors, were encouraged to make the poor Methodists the butt of their ridicule, was painful to me.— But these words of our Lord sounded an alarm to me, "Whosoever is ashamed of me and of my words before this adulterous generation, of him will I be ashamed before my father and his holy angels." I saw that in seeking to please others, I despised my Lord in his true members.

A little before, and at the time of my marriage, it seemed that all the combined powers of men and devils, with all their wit and finesse, were engaged to draw me into dancing, or civil recreation, falsely so alled. At my wedding, my wife's friends would

have a fiddler. To prevent this, I desired my father to speak to our good minister for me, to preach us a sermon at his house on the day after the wedding.— This he promised to do; and this frustrated the design of having a fiddler. But on the 9th, I received an open letter from the minister, in which he recalled his appointment to preach. This news flew like the wind, and a fiddler was sent for without my knowledge. On receiving this letter, my mind was impressed with heavy gloom; and the next day in gloomy dejection I dressed myself and went to be married. On arriving there, my spirits revived a little. The wedding guests were agreeable. But when I saw the fiddler, my gloom returned with double weight; I sought for a private place to adjust my feelings. The company saw my agitation, and knew the cause. The fiddler too, (poor black fellow) saw it, and it touched his heart, so that he never rested after this wedding, until God set his soul at liberty, and he broke his fiddle. Though I said nothing, yet I hurt their feelings because I was not cheerful. And every device of flattery and wit was resorted to, to cheer me up. Our good minister was requested to give his opinion in favor of dancing.— And so he did. May the Lord forgive him. A good man may be drawn to give an erroneous opinion, when importuned by people whom he wishes to please. So he gave his opinion that there was no harm in a civil dance, and advised me to give it up. "You cannot," said he, "stem the torrent." O how this pleased the company. After he was gone,

they praised the minister. He was one of the best of men, all agreed. Ah! said one, he is not starched up with superstition. All these things were said to cheer me up. But I was not entirely cured of my seriousness that night; however, within a week or ten days, being constantly in merry company, in attending two weddings, my Methodist notions (as my seriousness was called) were about cured.

In about ten days I called to see THOMAS HUBBARD, and after a free conversation with him and his wife, I again felt broken into contrition, and self-abasement for my folly: and now I resolved once more that I would seek the Lord: but my conviction was less pungent, so that I was afraid God had left me; though I could weep at times, yet the horror of guilt was passed: but shame for my instability remained, with only a general view of the justice of God in my damnation; in time past I had a clear and particular sense of the justice of God in my damnation; and therefore this general view now I thought was only a remembrance of the former views I had of God's retributive justice, and not an effect of the spirit of God, now convicting me of sin: and therefore I thought his spirit was withdrawn from me, or rather that I had grieved it away.

In this frame of mind, I continued until about the last of January, having been married on the tenth of this month; and having conversed with many after visiting T. H., to some of whom I related my experience when I was young; and some said that I had been converted, and that I should never

fall away; I told them that I had fallen away. O no, they said, the sparks of grace were in my heart covered up with sin, as fire in ashes, and I could never lose it. I said I had lost it, and that now I was as sure of being damned as I was sure there was a God of truth to judge the world, unless I obtained pardon for the sins I had committed. They said it hurt them to hear me talk so. I said that I have some hope that God will forgive me if I seek him in a right manner; for it is written, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God for he will abundantly pardon." They said, then you think to go to heaven by your works, do you? I said no, not by my works; but I believe that I must seek if I would find; and the Saviour saith, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." They said, "Ah! the Methodists hold that they are going to heaven by their works; and you are deceiving yourself with their doctrines." I said I had never heard the Methodists say that they were going to heaven by their works; but they say we cannot obtain mercy without repentance; and as to deceiving myself, I have long been deceived with sin, and if I do not forsake it, I shall be damned. They said they pitied me, and they advised me to be careful and not deceive myself with the Methodist doctrine.

I now saw that the Calvinists, whether Presbyterian or Baptists, instead of warning me against sin and pointing me to the Saviour of men for relief,

were only laboring to quiet my mind in sin, and to persuade me to believe myself a Christian in my backslidden and sinful state. To go on in folly and sin with the wicked, was sure destruction. To join any Christian church, I was not fit. And to get religion in my own power, I could not. And though I believed that pardon of sin was an act or work of God, yet he would not pardon, though he was willing to pardon, unless I sought him in a right manner. And to seek him and pray without the spirit of prayer, would be only lip service. And this spirit of conviction and prayer I had not so much of now as I had one month ago. Finally, I was convinced that the reason why God did not pardon my sins, was wholly a fault in me; and that if I had sought him with ALL my heart I should have found comfort. In this frame of mind I resolved that I would never eat, drink, nor sleep, until I had sought the Lord with all my heart, and obtained a sense of the pardon of my sins. It was at my wife's father's, on a cold night, the 28th of January, I retired to a cold room for private prayer, as all retired to bed, and putting my watch-coat over my shoulders, I kneeled down for prayer: immediately, thoughts were suggested that I was very presumptuous to make such a vow as I had done, for I might not find mercy, and as it was a very cold night, I might freeze to death and be damned; and that as I had been lately married, my wife and her father's family were all in bed in the same house, and would be disturbed by me, and be ashamed of me, and I

should certainly lose my character, and be counted crazy, and also grieve and offend my relations. But to all these suggestions I answered: I care not for them nor my own present ease; I will not break my vow. It was then suggested, presumptuous! You think to force the Lord —— I thought the kingdom of Heaven suffered violence. But something said, You have not concern enough—you have but very little concern now; had you not better put off the vow until you get more conviction, at least as much as you had one month ago? I said no, I will not. It was whispered to my mind, You will freeze to death and be damned. I said, Then, I will be damned crying for mercy. But you have not so much concern as you had two days ago, and if you will now break your vow and wait until the Lord pleases to send you more conviction, then you would stand some chance to find mercy; but now you will freeze, and die, and be damned. Then I will be damned, for I will not break my vow. I have vowed to cry for mercy until I obtain it.—And though my conviction is not so great as it has been, it is all because I have grieved the Holy Spirit by breaking my promises to live soberly, and seek the Lord with fervency of mind. O, how dull and stupid my mind is; I groaned out a desire for a due concern for my soul, and for God's praise and glory. In a moment it was suggested to my mind, you will disturb the family, your wife will be ashamed of you, your friends will be ashamed of you; you have been

lately married to an amiable young woman, one calculated to make your life happy, but your rash, presumptuous vow will destroy you; you cannot obtain mercy in this presumptuous way, neither will the Lord hear you, nor regard your cry, unless you have more of his spirit; and that you cannot obtain in this rash way; you had better break your vow, for a bad promise is better broken than kept. I said no, I will never break this promise, I have broken too many in days past. It is but to die and be damned. I shall die and be damned if I live as I have done, and what though this promise is rash, is it not more rash and presumptuous to expect God's blessing without using the means he requires? And he has said, "Ye shall find me when ye search after me with all your heart." But this I never have done, and now I will, or I will be damned. Jacob wrestled all night. David said, "I will not go up into my bed, nor give sleep to my eyes until I find out a place for the God of Jacob." If I am rash, they were rash; but who would call it rashness? none that would exhort me to seek the Lord with all my heart, and it is with all my heart I must seek God or be damned; why then should I regard such people, who rather than seek God with all their heart, would live in sin; and why should my vow be counted rash or sinful when it is against myself that I complain because I have never sought the Lord with all my heart. God is good; he has borne with me; but I have been vile and abused all his mercies; and now, when I vow in earnest that I will not abuse or disobey his call, it must be called presumptuous or rash. Let those call it so who will,

I care not for them—so away all earthly friends, I have done with you forever! Farewell fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, wife and friends, I have no more to do with you! you cannot save my soul; and now, O God, to thee I look; have mercy, have mercy, for mercy is all my plea.

Thus I continued on my knees for about five hours, and after struggling against the suggestion to break my vow, five or six times, my mind was fixed on God alone, and my only cry was, have mercy on me a sinner. O thou son of David, have mercy on me! O God, have mercy—show me mercy—mercy—mercy—mercy! when suddenly it appeared to me that the God to whom I prayed was the Lord God gracious and merciful. I said, yes, thou art merciful, and that moment the burden I felt was all gone. Though the burden was not so great as I had felt it in times past, at least it seemed so; but what I had was all gone, and joy with a sweet peace arose in my whole soul. I said yea, Lord, thou art my God, and I will praise thee. I will always praise thee. I arose from my knees, and found I was in quite a perspiration; I was warm in every part. Ah! thought I, now I know it was the devil that said I should freeze to death, but he is a liar, for I am warm, and the best of all is, God is with me, and he is my God.

I had a clear evidence of my acceptance with God until the next morning, when I proposed to pray in the family, but was opposed by my wife's mother, and this grieved me. I went out to the

barn to pray, but I was so tempted to doubt of the reality of what I had experienced, that although I felt no guilt of sin, yet I doubted whether the manifestation of pardon I had felt, was really conversion or not. And it was eight months before I had the clear witness that I was born of God.

From this time I labored to make all I read my own, and try myself by it. And being fully determined as soon as I thought I was fit, I would join the Methodists; I bought several of their books, particularly Mr. FLETCHER'S volumes, Christian's Pattern, the Saint's Rest, LAW'S Serious Call, ALLEINE'S Alarm. And after arranging my matters, I left my wife with her mother, while her father and brother were to go with me to Norway, to seek a place to settle ourselves; I went the last of February, and they came the last of April.

CHAPTER V.

THIS season, I bargained for a farm about the first of June; but immediately I was in heaviness, owing to conviction that I ought to go back and settle in the place where I was brought up.

It was this year, in the month of May, that I was to find the people that were revealed to me to have been in England, when I was twelve years old. And so it was, though I had not once thought that the Methodists were this people, until about the middle of the month of May—on a Sabbath, I had retired to the woods, to read Mr. FLETCHER'S Vindication. Because the Baptist people with whom I lived, had expressed a dissatisfaction at my reading that book, therefore I went into the woods, so as to give them no offence. And while reading these words, "What of God's mercy, which is over all his works?" "What of the oath, he swears that he willeth not the death of a sinner?" &c. and the whole sentence connected with it. I paused, and thought surely I have read this before. In a moment I recollected this was what I had revealed to me, when I was twelve years old, and this was the sign by which I was to know the people when I found them, and therefore the Methodists are the people I was to find. I read over the

subject again, and compared it with what was revealed to me at that time, and what I knew of the Methodists; and every thing answered so completely to the description I had of this people, that I was filled with wonder, love, and praise. O God! I said, thou hast brought me to thy banqueting-house: the house of my God, is his church and people. The Methodists surely are thy people; and now I know it is my duty to join them the first opportunity.

At this time I had also an impression to preach; and that I must go back to the town of Hinsdale where I was brought up, to commence preaching. Therefore, every measure I took to settle myself in Norway, proved a source of gloom and heaviness to my mind, and continued so, until one day while I was in secret prayer, I said, O Lord! if I can be freed from my engagement, honorably I will go back. Though of all places in the world, none appears to be more crossing for me to exhort, or begin the public worship of God, than in Hinsdale; yet, O Lord! I will never omit any duty that is made known to me, even if the devil stand at the door, or if I knew I should die for it. Immediately all my gloom and heaviness was gone. And that night the man I had bought the farm of, came and desired me to recant, because he could sell it for more than I was to give; I readily gave it up to him.

The impression to preach I construed to mean only exhortation: for I could not believe myself qualified to preach, nor believe that I could acquire qualifications which could do honor to the cause of God in

that station, for I doubted whether I was a child of God at this time, and if I were, I was the least of all. Therefore as the Methodists had one grade of official characters called exhorters, I concluded that exhortation was intended by the impression to preach: and if I was faithful to do my duty, all my doubts would be removed; also if I was a child of God I should have the witness of it; and if I was not now, the Lord would make me a child of his: insomuch that I had no fear of being damned, only I feared to neglect my duty.

When the farm was taken off my hands, I could easily dispose of the rest of my concerns, so as to return in the fall. But when my kind friends in that place found I would not settle with them, they began to importune me to tarry; one offered me a good bargain and then another, until I told them that I believed the Lord had made it my duty to go back to Hinsdale.

My first public exercises in the worship of God, commenced while in Norway, immediately after my mind was fully satisfied that the Methodists were the people I should live to see. I determined to exhort and pray with all I could so far as it appeared to me to be for the glory of God and the good of souls. One day I met with JONATHAN MILLER in a wood; I asked him why he did not pray to God and get his soul converted. He said the prayers of the wicked were an abomination to the Lord. I said yes; because they pray the Lord to depart from them, for they desire not the knowledge of his ways: and when

invited to come to the Lord, they pray to be excused, because they have bought a farm or married a wife. These prayers are an abomination to the Lord; but the prayers of a poor penitent sinner is, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and this prayer is not an abomination. I then asked him if he would kneel down with me, and I would pray for him. He did so; and we both arose, all bathed in tears. From this time he began to cry unto the Lord, and in about three weeks his burden of guilt was removed, and he began to praise the Lord.

We had no Methodists within twenty miles of us, and the Baptists held no meetings in our neighborhood, except one about seven miles off. Mr. MILLER urged me to hold meetings. I objected because I was not a member of any church, and I could join none but the Methodists; and I knew of none of these in that part of the country. Well, said he, then come to my house on the Sabbath, and spend the day with me in reading, singing, and prayer. To this I agreed, on condition that he would tell no one of it. He asked me if he might not tell Mrs. KNAPP, a very pious Baptist woman, who lived next neighbor to him. To this I agreed. But said, tell no one else.

On the next Sabbath instead of retiring to the woods, to spend the day in reading and prayer, as I used to, I contrived to get to Mr. MILLER's in some private way; because, many of our neighbors, if they knew where I was, would come to me to talk in a disputing way about religion; and I chose rather to

spend the holy Sabbath in reading and prayer. Therefore I was careful to go to Mr. MILLER's in a private way. I took to the woods, and so came out in the open field where Mr. M.'s house stood, with a full determination to bear my cross in praying as well as I could; supposing that I should have none to pray with but Mr. MILLER's family and Mrs. KNAPP; but when I entered the door, I was surprised to find the house full of people, from the south and east part of the settlement. They had a table and the great chair placed for the preacher to occupy, and I was informed that some had heard that I was to preach there that day. Mr. M. and Mrs. K. whispered to me, and said it all had happened without any design, for Mr. M. told Mrs. K., but never thought to desire her to say nothing about it to others, and she had notified some and they told others. But said Mrs. K., (in a loud whisper,) you must not let the cross be too great for you, but you must trust in the Lord and bear your cross. I sat trembling, and considering my vows that I would be faithful. I thought I will read, and sing, and pray, and in prayer I will be very careful not to say any thing that will give occasion for any one to reproach religion.

With trembling I arose, read a chapter in the Bible, then a hymn, and they joined in singing; and while singing I thought it would not do to kneel down with my face towards the people, for if I should be balked for want of words in prayer, the people would see the confusion in my face; so I turned and kneeled down with my face to the wall, and began to pray.

At first I looked well to my words, both of what I had said and what I should say, and I thought I prayed as well as any minister; but all at once, conviction seized my mind, that I was looking to my prayer, and not to the Lord. This confounded me. I swelled with grief that I should so mock God with a mere sound of words; my conscience chided me; but I immediately resolved to mock him no more in this way; and bursting into tears I cried unto the Lord with such form and words, as would express what I felt without any attention or regard to their grammatical order. My trembling all left me at once, and sweet peace and love to God and his creatures inspired me; and when I arose from prayer, I found nearly all the people in tears. The sight of which encouraged me so, I exhorted them a few minutes, and then prayed again, and so closed the meeting.

I apologized for holding the meeting in this manner, and that I only intended to spend the Sabbath with Mr. M., &c. But I hoped no one would reproach religion on account of my weakness. The people tarried after meeting to entreat me to hold meeting again the next Sabbath; and when I saw them so tender and loving, I consented, and because Mrs. KNAPP said she thought I ought to, by all means. But I was surprised to find that my meeting that day had been three and a half hours long by the watch. Truly, thought I, the zeal of thy house, O Lord, hath eaten me up to-day. My soul was all love to God and this dear people. So I agreed to have a meeting there on the next Sabbath. But, said

I, I hope you all will join with me to persuade the professors of religion to come forward, and take the lead of the meeting, which they did; but not till after I had held two or three meetings, in which time many were awakened, and thirteen professed to be converted. Then the old professors came out to nurse the young converts, and sent off for a Baptist minister to come and preach in the place. They found it easy to proselyte some of them over to the Baptist modes and faith. But many would not join the Baptist church, until they conversed with me. I told them, that when I joined any church, it would be with the Methodists; but as there were none of them in that place, and I did not know that there ever would be, I could not advise them to join any church; but if they could reconcile the customs and doctrines of the Baptists to their feelings, I would advise them to join them; for I did not think religion consisted in opinions, but in living a life of righteousness. As to the doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation, as held by the Baptists, I did not believe it was consistent with the true sense of the Scripture, or with common sense; for Jesus had purified unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, and good works I believed were the best evidences of a man's religion. If you are Baptists, show your faith by your works, and we shall not differ about the essentials of religion.—Upon this they joined the Baptists. But the minister came to talk with me. He labored to prove to me that unconditional election and reprobation, were agreeable to Scripture. I asked him if it

was true that God before the foundation of the world, did pass an irrevocable decree of reprobation upon the greater part of his creatures. "I wish you," said I, "to account for the justice of that decree by appealing to a sin committed after the foundation of the world." His brother present, who was a Congregational minister, was desired to answer it. He began with a similitude. He said, "supposing I hold a staff in my hand, and you have offended me, and I am about to chastise you with the staff; and suppose this staff owed you a grudge, and I did not know that the staff meant to take that opportunity to revenge, and if I should strike you with the staff, and the staff should strike too, and hurt you more than I intended to; how could I be to blame, when I only hurt you in proportion as you deserved from me." I said, "sir, I do not understand your similitude." He then explained it by saying—"The Assyrians were the staff in the hand of God to punish Israel, when they had sinned against him." I replied, "I do not understand your similitude yet." There were present at the same time some Baptist brethren, and they asked how they could reconcile that God decreed whatsoever comes to pass? And he stated another similitude, after he had asked, if God did not know all things. And how he could know unless he had decreed? "Suppose," said he, "I should ask you if you were going to meeting to-morrow, and you should say, I don't know; why don't you know? You would answer, because I have not determined; after

awhile I see you, and ask you the question again, and you say yes, and I should ask how do you know? you would say, because I have determined;' so God knew because he had determined. They all said, that was plain, now I see into it, now I see into it. I said but little, for I saw all were opposed to me. The two ministers agreed in opposing the doctrine of good works as held by the Methodists. They asked me if I thought I could go to heaven by my works; I said not by the merit of my works, but by works as a condition. They expressed surprise, and wondered that any one should be so deceived. I asked them if Jesus Christ had not purified unto himself a peculiar people; zealous of good works? They said, "yes." Again, if works were not a condition of justification at the bar of God, why did our Lord say, "Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his works shall be?" Rev. xxii. 12. They said a great deal about works being the fruits of faith; and faith was the gift of God, and this he gave to whom he pleased. Therefore he had mercy on whom he would have mercy, and whom he would, he hardened. One said, "if the Christian was asked why he did good works, he would answer, because he could not help it, and therefore he would give all the glory to God." The Baptist brethren present, were all well pleased to hear them confute me, as they called it; and said to me, now I think you must be convinced. I said nothing then; but the next day when the ministers were gone, they asked me if I did not see the sub-

ject of election and decrees, in a different point of light from what I had before: I said, "no, I see nothing in what they have said to alter my mind." "Well," one said, "I am sorry for you; for my part I see all through it." But when I repeated their similitudes, and asked, if he did not say that he did not know the staff meant to take that opportunity to revenge: and by so doing I was punished more than he intended? They said, "yes." Well, now apply it to God as he said Assyria was the staff that God held in his hand, to punish Israel. But did not God know that Assyria owed Israel a grudge and meant to revenge, and did not God mean that Assyria should punish Israel so badly? If not, then he could not have decreed quite all that Assyria did; therefore something came to pass that God did not decree. Again, if God did not know, or could not know, (as they intimated) unless he had decreed; then certainly he was ignorant, until he had decreed; and if so, how can an ignorant God decree things wisely?

Upon this they altered their minds, and said, that finally they could not believe that God had decreed whatsoever comes to pass. But notwithstanding this, as soon as their minister came among them again, they would become strong in the faith that all things were decreed. This was frequently the case; but as I said nothing severe, I was not very hotly attacked by any one, though I had the mortification to witness an abuse of the truth. So that when I left that place, I was determined never again so to regard

the feelings of men, as to hear them abuse the truth without reproof.

I settled my affairs in Norway in October, and returned to Hinsdale; I found my wife well. My friends appeared to be glad to see me, but expressed a dissatisfaction at my Methodistical notions, and my zeal to hold meetings. The number of my friends in whom I could confide was very small; but the Lord blessed me with a clear sense of my acceptance with him. On looking into the Methodist Hymn Book, I read these lines:—

"Maker, Saviour of mankind,
Who hast on me bestow'd,
An immortal soul design'd,
To be the house of God."

That moment the Spirit bore witness with my spirit, that God dwelt in me and I in him. My soul was happy—my faith was strong.

I went to the Methodist meeting, seven miles off. The first I had been at for eight months. The meeting had began when I came in. On seeing my old Methodist friends, I was exceedingly affected; tears ran down all the time of meeting; and after preaching, I staid in class, and a most melting, loving time we had. The preacher at the close of the meeting, asked if any one desired to join the class. I arose and said, "I feel myself unworthy to be a member of any church, but I believe the Lord has blessed me, and if the brethren think it is proper, I wish to be a member." They accepted of me, and I was very happy in God and with my brethren.

I visited among my old acquaintances for some days, and attended several prayer-meetings, in which I was called upon to pray. This was a great cross to me. I had flattered myself, that if I visited among the Methodists, I should hear them pray, and I could improve my gift, for I was weak and feeble, and of little faith. But to my surprise, they called on me to pray in their families, and I dare not refuse, though the weakest of all. I was afraid this would injure me. But I gave myself more especially to secret prayer and reading; and now I have reason to bless God for it.

The society to which I first joined, was about seven miles from where I resided, and although I attended constantly on the Sabbath, yet I could not often meet them in prayer-meeting. I therefore, by the desire of a few, had prayer-meetings in the place where I lived. This was attended with good effect. Several experienced religion, and desired to have preaching with us. Accordingly I invited the preachers to come and preach for us. They did so; and formed a class of fifteen, and appointed me the leader. All this was before my six months' probation had expired. I was afraid that I was running too fast, and I should fall away. But I gave myself more fervently to secret prayer. My peace was like a river, and my brethren were all of one heart and soul in the work of the Lord.

But the Calvinists of the standing order, soon began to express fears that all was not right. I began to exhort, and some who knew no better, said I

preached. This gave alarm. My father reproved me for preaching, because I had not been educated at college. He declared that I was too ignorant to preach. I told him I only exhorted; but this did not satisfy him. It appeared that my holding meetings was displeasing to him. He accused me of bringing disgrace on myself and on my relations, and advised me to desist if I expected his approbation and assistance. I assured my father that I had not engaged in this work from any other motive than a sense of duty, and a desire to save my soul. He then held forth the advantage he could be to me; but if I continued in the way I had been, he would never give me any property. I replied, "I have not engaged in this work, but from a conviction that God has called me to it, and as to this world's goods, I would rather beg my bread barefoot to Heaven than to ride in a coach to hell; and if my father does not see fit to help me, I shall not neglect what I conscientiously think to be my duty, for men or devils; but like Joshua, I am resolved to serve the Lord." My father appeared to be in a great passion, and reviled the idea of my being called of the Lord to any duty, and accused me of stubbornness, and so turned away and left me, after he had said he would never help me. It grieved me to see my father in a passion, and not only because it was a sin, but because among all my relations, I had none to join with me, except one sister and her husband. My step-mother was tender-hearted, and wished me well; but she dare

not speak her mind about the Methodists. My wife's father was a still man. He neither cursed them nor blessed them; but her mother was very talkative, and positive that they were a deluded people; so that my wife, by her influence, was opposed to the Methodists, and ashamed of me as she said, because every body was speaking against me; and that she was ashamed to shew her head out of the door. I could not therefore acquaint her of this unfortunate breach with my father, lest she should also join with him, and make my life more miserable than it otherwise would be. I returned home with a sad heart, and yet rejoicing that my father had no cause of complaint, but what arose from my religious practice; and though it was grievous to think that a father, who never had indulged in reviling religion of any order, should now be guilty of showing contempt to the Methodists, who had been instrumental of quickening him in the best religious exercises I had known him to practice for many years. On my way, I repeatedly put the question to myself—is it possible? Will my father despise the people that have been instrumental of so much good to him? And am I to be disinherited because I would obey God rather than man? Well, be it so. I will bear the scandal of the cross in meekness, and trust in the Lord.

When I arrived at my house, it being late at night, all were asleep. I got a light, and sat down to my Bible, after praying that God would instruct me by his word. I opened to the thirteenth chapter of

Deuteronomy, sixth to eleventh; this was a comfort to my soul.

I felt confirmed in my resolution to forsake father, mother, wife, and all, for Christ's sake.

Many came to dispute me in those days. All expressed a sorrow, that I should be deluded by the Methodists. I have no doubt but they were sincerely concerned for me. Good works, perfection, and falling from grace, were the points of debate. For these the Methodists were pronounced deluded. But it was so, that none expressed or understood either of those doctrines, as the Methodists held them; each making his own inference from the doctrine in such a manner as to accuse the Methodists with error. That if repentance and faith were the work of the creature, and a condition of justification, they inferred, that there was merit in repentance and faith; so also of obedience to God's commandments. I found it difficult to make some understand, as I did, the propriety of Mr. Wesley's beautiful expression defining the Methodistical sense of *good works, viz.* —"*Not by the merit of works, but by works as a condition.*"

Perfection!—Nothing appeared so pernicious to the minds of some, as the doctrine of Perfection. It was confidently asserted by some, that we could not live without sin, that we could not breath without sin. All our prayers were mixed with sin. We sinned in thought, word, and deed, day and night, awake or asleep; and yet we could not fall from grace.

Falling from grace was said by some to be a damn-

able heresy! They asserted that an elect saint of God could no more fall, so as to perish everlastingly, than Christ could fall from his throne. The covenant was well ordered in all things, and sure. But for the Methodists to refute, as they did, the doctrine of unconditional election; and that God for his own glory, foreordained whatsoever comes to pass; formed the climax of Methodistical absurdity; it was a crime to be punished by the law, some said; and others more gravely said, it was a sure mark of a reprobate.—Oh, how deep they would sigh, and pity me for my delusion.

I improved my time in searching the Scriptures. I soon read my Bible through in course, and committed many passages to memory. Though I had only a small degree of education, barely a common school education, yet I could sometimes read one hundred pages in a long winter's evening, and the next day work hard at farming business, dressing flax, threshing grain, chopping wood; working with my hands, that I might not be chargeable to any, and have something good to feed the Methodist preacher and his horse. I said to my wife one day, Come, my dear, let us make one rule to be observed by us in our future life. Well, she says, what is that? Let us make our table free to all Christians of all persuasions, and never let a hungry person go without a supply of food for his comfort; she said, well I am agreed. And I was pleased to find that when my Methodist preacher came, she would get the best there was in the house; but poor soul, she had not

yet experienced religion. Nor would she attend to the Methodist meetings at all, but seemed determined to be a Presbyterian. Her generous spirit pleased me, while I felt an increasing regret that she should be lost forever, for want of an experience of religion. This text, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," often sounded an alarm in my soul for her: I was therefore more ardent in prayer for her. But when I spoke to her of the necessity of an experience of religion, and reproved her unguarded expression, she would sometimes get into a pet, and accuse me with no other design in talking to her, than to make a Methodist of her. But she one time told me in a pet, she would not be a Methodist; no, she would die first. I said, you are mistaken in my designs and motives. I will assure you, if you will only be a Christian in reality, you may join any denomination you please; I will never hinder you; but will do all I can to help you along, only I shall be a Methodist. When it is convenient for me to attend with you, I will; but I cannot neglect my meeting for yours.

Things went on very well with us. I took land to till upon shares, and had good crops. She would spin and weave. We had food to eat, and raiment to put on, and a hired room to live in, the first year.

I bought fifty acres of new land, cleared a small spot, and put me up a small house. While this was doing, many came to see me in our hired room. Some to hear me explain Scripture, and some to dispute. In our disputes, my wife would join with them. This

would encourage them to be severe in their censures; for when they could not bring argument, or explain the difficulties I throwed in their way; though they did not use the same language the Pharisees did to the man that had been blind, "Thou wast altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach us:" they would say: Ah! you are wrong! you are deceived! "Why! do you think that our forefathers would not have known this, if it had been right? and our ministers who have been to college, never found it out. And now these Methodists; ah! these Methodists, that have never been to college, come among us to teach us! no, I don't believe you are right." I would then ask them if they had anything to say against my moral character. "O no," they would say. "But we are sorry to have so likely a young man deluded."

CHAPTER VI.

The few Methodists in this place were watched closely, and critically by some, and religiously by others. I was complained of as being too precise, too strict, too sober; he is not company for any body, now, say they. It was reported that I was so perfect, that I did not commit any sin. O, my delusion was ripe! When I went abroad, I found many had heard of me that I knew nothing about. Some were afraid of me, and as I entered a house, the children would run to hide themselves from me. I could hear them say, "It is he! how he looks," while they were peeping through some knot-hole, or crack of the door. "Will he make Methodists of us?" "Why!" another would say, "he's a man, daddy and mammy talk to him, he won't hurt us." I have often thought, what do the people think; is it so, that a man that professes to have communion with God, and to know that God for Christ's sake, has forgiven him all his sins, becomes a wonder in the world. For this profession was, in the opinion of some, the foundation of all my delusion. It was very rare to find, in the standing order, any, even among their ministers, that professed to know that their sins were forgiven.

Among the Baptists there were some, but they were all deceived. However, they were not so badly deceived as the Methodists were, because they held to unconditional election, and that we could not live without sin. But they were quite deluded with the notion of knowing their sins forgiven, and holding to inspiration, &c. Why is it, thought I, that this work of the forgiveness of sins should be acknowledged by the Presbyterians to be essential to salvation; and that it is a mighty powerful work of God too, wrought in the heart by an irresistible influence of the Holy Ghost, and yet wrought so secretly that the creature knows nothing of it, and as some said, he could not know it!

Another thing that made me a butt for some to shoot at, was, I had thought it my duty not only to exhort people to quit their sins and pray to God to convert their souls; but also to reprove whatever I heard or saw that was sinful, in all company, at home or abroad. Some said in this I did wrong, and quote the Scripture, "cast not your pearls before swine, lest they turn again and rend you." But I quoted—"Thou shalt not suffer sin upon thy brother or neighbor, but thou shalt rebuke him." So I went on reproving in the most loving, gentle manner I could. Some received it well, and some turned upon me and railed with vehemence. Though I do not remember of but one, that carried his railing to a vehement vulgarity in our town, and that was at a town-meeting. I, with many others, left the cold meeting house to go into a tavern near by to warm ourselves.

There were many in the large bar-room seated around, while one was walking up and down the room, strutting in ruffles and gloves, and swearing profanely, seemingly to the full approbation of all present. As he came towards the place where I was standing, he kept up his swearing—I tapped him gently on the shoulder, and said softly, Mr. —, don't swear so; at which he turned around and uttered an oath, and called me a d——n fool. Why, Hibbard, said he, you used to be a likely, bright young man, till you met with these Methodists; but they have made a d——n fool of you. I held down my head as though I was very sorry for what I had done. The company were all laughing to hear him give it down to me. After he had given me his last piece of advice not to reprove gentlemen, &c., I looked up upon him, and making my bow, I said, Mister, I ask your pardon, I believe I have crowded a little upon that rule of Scripture, where it says, "Cast not your pearls before swine, lest they turn again and rend you;" but I have done it ignorantly, for I did not know that you were a hog. At this the laugh turned in my favor, while my seriousness awed them into due respect. I never heard Mr. ——— swear afterwards; neither was I ever frowned upon afterwards, for reproving, by any one that knew me in these parts.

I was in Troy some time after, and in seeking for board, I made one condition with my host, viz., if I board with you, I will give you your price, on this condition, that you and your family shall attend

to prayers, night and morning ; either you must pray, or command all your household to attend while I pray. At this he seemed to be a little surprised ; but agreed to it heartily ; and though it had been difficult for him to get good boarders before, it was not a week before he had more than he could well take care of. His house became noted and known by the name of the praying-house, above the pump. Some evenings after prayer with the family, we could see many leaving the windows and door where they had been listening. My heart has often yearned and melted in earnest prayer for them. Soon I was known almost all over the town. They called me the Methodist preacher. I held meetings on Sabbaths, for five or six weeks that I was there, and exhorted the people to quit their sins, and pray to God to convert their souls. One evening there came in a stranger, to do some business with our host, while we were at supper. He swore profanely. I said, you should not swear, sir; he d—d me, and bid me not reprove him. In a few words more, he swore again ; I reproved him ; he called me a d——d hypocrite, that I would swear when out on business, as he was, for it was all the fashion, he said ; directly he swore again ; and I said again, you ought not to swear, it is no mark of a gentleman to swear. He then threatened me, if I reproved him again, he should take it as an insult, and he would give me what I deserved. I said, then you must swear no more, if you do I shall reprove you. For some time, he refrained, often, however, pinching off

an oath, or curse half spoken. But at length he swore again, and I reproved him ; he then began to laugh at me, and call me a hypocrite. This kind of treatment continued till after supper. We waited a short time, to have him depart. The boarders thought surely, we shall not have prayers, and so retired to their beds ; I saw the family also about to retire. I called the master to attend to prayers. He gave the sign to have me pray. I read a short chapter, and kneeled down to prayer. Before I was half done, I could hear my swearing man weeping like PETER, after he swore, and when I arose, he came to me all in tears, and begged my pardon for the abuse he had given me. I forgave as it respected myself, and I hoped God would also. He then turned to the landlord, and said he had been deceived in me ; I thought him such a Christian as we have in our parts, that would reprove others and swear themselves ; but he said, he had never met with such a man in all his life before. He then agreed for lodgings, as he said, to have conversation with me about religion ; for, turning to me, I have had some serious thoughts at times about religion ; and if you are willing to instruct me, I would set up all night. The lion had become so lamb-like, I could do no less than to agree to instruct him all I was capable of doing. I said I am not a minister, but a plain man. He tarried with us five days, and having kept me awake nearly all that night, with his inquiries, I was next day sick with the ague and fever.

My labors by day, and so much talking or study at nights, wore me down to mere skin and bones.

One day while helping a captain of a vessel to unload some goods, one of the sailors swore, and I reproved him mildly. He said he would not be reproved; I said, then you must not swear. After a little while, he swore again, and I reproved him, at which he flew in a rage, and ran and got a handspike, swearing a great oath that he would send me to hell. He came towards me with his handspike lifted up; I stepped up to him, and said strike me if you dare; at which he stepped back, and as the captain was coming out of the cabin, I said, Captain, do you keep hands in your employ to insult people, and to outrage all decency? Dismiss this man from your service immediately. He turned to him, and reprimanded him for his insolence, and bid him mind his business, or he would dismiss him. After this I met with no more insults. All seemed to seek for opportunity to converse with me. Our little meeting increased. I was sorry to have it said that I was a minister, as I had no license to preach. I did not profess to do any thing more than to exhort the people to quit their sins, &c. But my method was to open meeting by singing and prayer, and then read a chapter or two, and give my views of it, or some parts of it, and enforce the necessity of religion. Some of my brethren called this preaching; but I thought otherwise. However, I thought it was my duty to do all the good I could by explaining the

word of God, as I understood it, let them call it by whatever name they might.

As I saw the good effects of my reproving, I felt encouraged to be faithful in it. But I was aware that different manners of reproof were necessary to different persons; for I had read Dean Swift, who says, "Never hew blocks with a razor."

When my neighbors came to dispute me, I would begin with them about the experience of religion; I would ask them "if they had ever obtained the knowledge of the forgiveness of their sins?" To which, many of them could make no reply, but in the negative; and others would say, "I hope so." And if I asked when, or where, or how, they met with this change, they were quite shut up or would excuse themselves, that their experience was not so clear as some. I would ask, "can you give a reason of the hope that is in you?" They declined. It seemed they were quite out of their element; but they wanted to talk about doctrines. Then I would ask, "how can you know the truth of doctrines, when our Lord says, "if ye do the things I say, ye shall know of the doctrines," &c. By this means I evaded many disputes. None pretended to dispute my experience; but it seemed all were struck with solemn awe, when I related to them my conviction for sin, and the sense I had of pardon. Some said, "I had been more highly favored than thousands; but they were surprised that I should join the Methodists." They sent for their most experienced men to talk

with me. There was one who professed great experience, with whom I had been well acquainted for years before ; but for a few years, we had not seen each other. He came to see me ; and expressed great joy (after hearing my experience) " that God," as he said, " had blessed me with regenerating grace." He then began to encourage me to join their church of the standing order. I said, " I have joined the Methodists." He started with surprise, and put up his hands and said, " Why ! you can't believe in a possibility of falling from grace ?" I said, " yes, I fully believe it." He stared upon me some time, till tears began to run down his face. He said, " Oh ! I am sorry for you ; it pains me to the heart ! But I must tell you, that you are deluded. You have deceived yourself." I said, " I thought you said you had a witness, that I was truly converted." " Yes," he said, as his tears and affection seemed to increase ; " but that doctrine is a damnable heresy, and I am sorry to have you lost forever, with such a delusion." I said, " Mr. ——, your tears are hypocritical, now dry them up, for you have often seen me when I was trifling and vain, and careless about God and religion ; and you never came to me with tears and said I am afraid you are deluded ; but now, when you acknowledge that you believe I am truly converted, you are affected with concern that I shall be lost, because I believe there is a possibility of falling from grace. If your doctrine be true, I can never fall ; so you need not trouble yourself

about me. But it appears, all you want is to proselyte me to your order." He was amazed, and dried up his tears as suddenly as he got into them. I then said, " don't you fear to commit sin against God ?" He said, " yes." I said, " so do I." Again, " do you not fear that you may be left to so sin against God, that he would cast you off for ever ?" He said, " yes." " So do I ; in this we agree." " Let us fear, (the Apostle saith) lest a promise being left us of entering into that rest, any of you should come short of it." " Now do you believe this fear is inspired in us by the spirit of God, or the spirit of the devil ?" " O, by the spirit of God, surely." " Well, would the spirit of God inspire us to fear where there was no danger ?" " Why, really I don't know, but you have more Scripture and reason for your doctrine than I thought for !" So we parted.

Capt. B. came to me and said, " I hear that you deny election." I said, " it is a mistake, I do not deny election." " Why," said he, " do you believe that God for his own glory hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass ?" I said " no ; that is not election." " Well, but," said he, " you cannot believe in election unless you believe that." " Well," said I, " I never believed that, nor I never mean to." Then he went on to quote scripture, to prove that God had foreordained whatsoever comes to pass. He said, " The Lord worketh all things after the counsel of his own will—the Lord hath made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil—I make light, I create darkness, I make peace,

I create evil, I the Lord do all these things. Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; ye have taken, and by wicked hands, have crucified and slain." He then said, "this proves that God hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass." I said, "I don't believe that, nor I never mean to." "Why," said he, "the apostle Paul knew that some would not believe it, and therefore he said, 'But who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?'" "O," said I, "I do not reply against God; no! God has made me to disbelieve it, and I am glad of it, for I don't want to believe that God has decreed every thing." "Well," said he, "if you don't believe it, you can never go to Heaven!" I said, "I don't want to!" He said, "it hurts me to hear you talk so." "Why?" said I, "if God has decreed that I should go to hell, I wish to go straight off to hell! I don't care about going to a day of judgment to know that I must be damned; if he would let me know it here, I would go straight off." He looked pale, and said, "it hurts me to hear you talk so." I said, "do you think God has decreed any thing contrary to his will?" He said, "No." I said, "well then, if he decreed that I should be damned, it was his will that I should be, and I wish to acquiesce and submit, and make his will my choice." He said, "it hurts me to hear you talk so." I said, "to acquiesce in the will of God, is my happiness, and I shall be happy in hell. Yes, I shall be as happy in hell as you will

in Heaven, for you and God will be always quarrelling." He said, (shaking his head,) "it hurts me to hear you talk so." "Why," said I, "do you not believe God decreed all our words and thoughts, as well as our actions?" He said, "yes." "Well then, God decreed that I should talk and think just as I do, and this you say, 'hurts you;' it is because you are not reconciled to the will of God; therefore if you go to Heaven, you would be quarrelling with God, and I should not like to be there to see it. Further, I have to say to you; if God decreed all our thoughts and words, as you say, he decreed what I am now about to say; and that is, that your doctrine is the last doctrine the devil ever throwed out of hell, and if you don't quit it, you will be damned like a devil. Now God decreed among all the rest, that I should say so. If your doctrine be true, and I don't believe he would decree me to say so, unless it was so; therefore you had better look out." He went away sorrowful; and I was pleased at having an opportunity of rebutting the absurd doctrine, in the very man that had been the means of giving me so much trouble and confusion of thoughts, when I was twelve years old. However, I heard that he said afterwards, that I was a dangerous young man to talk with.

A little after, another came to instruct me; and he went on with a long discourse of his opinions of election and reprobation. He said, "that God before the foundation of the world, elected a certain number, and gave them to his Son Jesus Christ in a covenant of grace he made with him, and this covenant of grace

he called the new covenant, &c. And all that were not elected were reprobated. "Well," I says, "you are one of the reprobates." He said, "O you are not charitable." I said, "yes, I think I am, I speak the truth." "No!" said he, "but you are not charitable, you judge." "Well," said I, "I judge righteous judgment, and that is charitable I am sure." Some that stood by, said, "oh, no, you ought not to judge so." "Well," said I, "but by their fruits I am to know them; and I judge him according to his fruits, for reprobates are always guilty of accusing God with injustice. One reprobate said in plain words in old time, I know thou art a hard master, reaping where thou hast not strewed; so Mr. G. says, God requires the reprobates to repent, but never gives them grace to repent. He has said also, that the Father entered into a covenant, (that is, a bargain) with his Son, and gave him all the elect, and no more; if he would die, &c. And this gift is said to be a generous one, and out of great love for his Son. Now, if the grant made by the Father to the Son in the bargain (for a covenant is a bargain) was not a full reward for his labor; then he cheated him by requiring more of him than what he paid him for; unless he had no more to give. But we are told, that the Father had more, and had given them to the devil by a decree of reprobation. But what was this for? What had the devil done to merit so many subjects? We read that he deceived mother Eve, and stirred up rebellion against God. But would God therefore give him the greater part of his creatures to reward

him for deceiving one woman? Besides it is said, the Father gave the Son all the elect out of love to him. Yes, great love, because he gave him so many. But the elect are called a remnant. This figure of speech, is to represent a very small number, as when a tailor has cut up a piece of cloth into garments, and there is a small piece left, not sufficient for a garment—this is called a remnant; and to explain this text agreeably to your doctrine, we must say: when God the Father decreed to make a world of human beings, he decreed to dispose of them as he pleased, for surely he can do what he will with his own.—Well, your doctrine says, he gave the old devil by a decree of reprobation, the greater part of them. Shall we say it was out of love to him?" "O no." "But why not? If giving a small remnant to his Son, was a mark of love to him; sure the more he gave, the greater the love; and by this parity of reasoning, he must have loved the devil more than he did Christ. You see what injustice and folly you are ascribing to God;—these, I say, are the marks of reprobates. Therefore, I said you are a reprobate." Such harsh talk surprised them; and all present seemed amazed and confounded for some time, and at last he said: "Well, but a man may be mistaken in his opinion, and not be a reprobate." I said "yes; but what will you do? You say God has decreed *whatsoever* comes to pass,—and it has come to pass, that I have said you are a reprobate; do you think God would decree me to say so, unless it was so?" He made no answer to this, but swallowed his spittle, and went

away. I was sorry to hurt his feelings, but I thought, can I hear the God of love and goodness himself, spoken of as an unjust tyrant, and not reprove the absurdity? No! Let God be true and every man a liar. Why should I regard the feelings of puny man, when he does not regard the character of the immaculate God! But then, if they are under the power of delusion, I ought to pity them, and pray for them; —yes, this is my duty. This led me to a greater fervency in prayer for the Calvinists, and for myself too, that I might discharge my duty to God and precious souls, in the spirit of pure love.

I could but observe that all who were firm in the faith of election and reprobation, always considered themselves of the number of the elect, though they would be very modest in their profession. They would not say, I know I am one of the elect, I know I am converted, &c.; but I hope I am elected, I hope I am converted, I hope I love God, I hope I have got a hope, &c.

CHAPTER VII.

Our class was as it were of one soul, united in love; and though our gifts were small, yet the blessings of God were great. After I moved from our hired room to the little cottage I had built in the woods, I was one evening going to prayer meeting; and as my wife had so repeatedly said that she would not be a Methodist, or go with me to my meetings, I said nothing to her. But she now said, I have a mind to go along with you, if you will carry the child. I said, "O yes." So for the first time, she went with me to a prayer meeting. After we returned home, and I was kindling a fire she sat holding the child, I said, "how did you like the meeting?" She said nothing. I blowed up the coals, and got the fire blazing; then I asked her again, how did you like the meeting? and turning to her I saw tears running down her face. Seeing this, I renewed my question in a softer tone. She answered, "O how they love one another, I never saw such love in all my life." I said, "my dear, that is our religion." "Well, I believe it is a good religion, said she; but I never saw so much love among any people before." This conversation gave new springs to my faith, that my dear wife was not far from the kingdom of Heaven. This, with a circumstance

that occurred a few months before we moved, confirmed in me a firm belief, that God had taken my wife in hand; and that he would convert her soul, if "I continued in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety." 1 Tim. ii. 15. The circumstance that occurred was this:—The woman and daughter of the family where we lived, often came into our room to hear my wife read in JOHN BUNYAN's Pilgrim's progress; and one day she was reading how CHRISTIANA opposed CHRISTIAN when he set out on pilgrimage. The thought struck her, this is like me. I oppose my husband, as CHRISTIANA did, and she was afraid the woman would say, "that is like you." So she laid aside the book, and excused herself for not reading any longer then. But after they went out, she got the book and read it over again by herself. I happened to come in a little after, and saw she had been in tears. I said nothing to her then; but went away to the barn, and prayed for her: I thanked God most heartily for the prospect of conviction in my wife. I revolved in my mind many ways, how I should introduce a discourse with her on the subject, so as to have her own the truth of what she felt on her mind; for she, like others, when convicted in those days, would hide it every way she could. So at night when we were alone, I began to confess my neglect of duty to her; that I was afraid I did not love her as I ought; because I had so seldom spoken to her about the concern of her soul; and I felt distressed for myself and for her. Again I have thought, said I, that the reason why you

were not willing to own any convictions on your mind, was for fear I would speak of it to others. But I have thought that if you have any concern, and will mention it to me, I will not speak of it to others, unless you are willing; for we ought to bear each others burdens. Now, my dear, I wish you would be free with me, and tell me if you have any concern. Upon this with tears she began to state that she had; and told me how it came upon her. I had never read that part of JOHN BUNYAN's work, so I got the book and read it over; and found some words to be the same she had used to me, so that she might well think *"this is like me."* After this she would talk freely to me respecting the salvation of her soul; though I had never proposed to her any thing about going to my meetings or joining any denomination of Christians; but now, when she appeared to be quickened up anew, and when she had attended several Methodist meetings, I one day began again to confess I was afraid that I did not discharge my duty to her. She asked me wherein, for she had no fault to find: I said, why it may be that you have a desire to join some church, and want me to carry you to some minister, and introduce you to him, and you may be afraid to ask me, and I ought not to put you to that trouble. But I wish you to know, that I am perfectly willing that you should join any order or denomination you choose, if you will only live religion. I am a Methodist, and I intend to continue a Methodist; and by the grace of God I mean to live religion. But I think other denominations may live religion also;

and if you are a Presbyterian or a Baptist, we can live religion together; only it will not be quite so handy for you to go to one meeting and I to another, at the same time; but I am sure we can get along with it very well, provided we agree; therefore, I want you to make free with me, and let me know what denomination you wish to join. Upon this, she began to say with tears: "It is with me as it was with a young woman I heard of." I said, how was that? "Why, there was a religious man that used to pray with the sick, and this young woman was one day laughing about him, when her parents chided her for it, and said you may be sick, and want him to pray for you; but she said, no, I will die first, before I would ask him. It was not long before she was taken sick, and this religious man happened to come in. When she saw him, it reminded her of her speech, and she was in great distress, and some thought she would die. Mr. —— also stood by her bed, and saw her in an agony. When she got strength to speak, she looked upon him and said, "O Mr. —— do pray for me, or I shall die." So it is with me. I have said I would die before I would join the Methodists, and now, if I don't join them, I shall die." Well, I said, my dear, this is all of the Lord, you can't say I have proselyted you. No, she said, I have nothing to accuse you with.

After this she was baptized by the Methodist preacher. At the same time, I gave up my dear child also in baptism. This was a solemn, joyful time to me, and many others. My wife was peculiarly blessed,

and the great solemnity of her countenance, so affected the people, that it was spoken of as wonderful. And many that heard of it came to our meetings afterwards, to see the wonder. So the work of religion revived among us, and we increased in the love and zeal of God.

Now my conviction increased upon me, that God had called me to preach. I had often been impressed with the duty; and labored to discharge it by exhorting. But many said, I must preach. The Minister of the standing order in our town, one day when we were together, slapt me on the shoulder and said, "you must preach." I said, "I don't know yet, I think I am too ignorant for that." "Well, well," said he, "you have got to preach for all, and you must attend to the funerals in this part of the town. I will speak to the people at the funeral to-day, that if there should be any other funeral occasions, to call on you, for it is so far for me to come; and I have so many calls otherwise, that I doubt whether I can attend them. *But you have got to preach, so you may as well prepare and begin in this way.*" I thought this was very candid in our Presbyterian minister; and to talk thus to a zealous Methodist class-leader, who could not agree with him in some doctrinal points, plainly showed me that he did not view religion to consist in forms or opinions. Indeed we had always viewed him to be one of the most catholic good men in all this region.

But I had not only thought I was too ignorant to

preach, but I had thought exhortation was a field of labor that would answer the call of God. And not only so,—but I had thought I was not holy enough to administer the sacraments. And it appeared to me, that no man ought to minister whose wife is unconverted ; for if a man cannot be instrumental of the conversion of his wife, he will not be instrumental of the conversion of any other sinners.—And if a minister is not instrumental of the conversion of some souls, it is because God has not called him. Therefore, before the conversion of my wife, I answered all theimpressions to preach, by saying, this impression cannot be of God, if it was my prayers for my wife would be answered. But now when I saw all my prayers answered for her, I was afraid I should sin against God, if I any longer doubted the impression to be from him. However, as I had bought a new farm, for which I owed, and as the salary of a Methodist preacher hardly supplied his necessities, without supplying any conveniences, and as he scarcely ever got over half that, I thought it wisdom, first to pay for my farm, get clear of debt, and get a few cows for my wife to make a small dairy, and then travel and preach all I could. With this wise plan in my head, I worked hard in the day, and studied hard at nights—prayed five or six times a day in my family, and in secret, attended my meetings on Sabbaths, and one prayer meeting every week, and once in two weeks we had preaching.

I had nothing to trouble me, but my impression to preach ; and my fears lest I should sin if

I did not, and sin if I did ; some days, these fears made me almost miserable. I pined away like one in the quick consumption, and like JONAH, prayed for death. My soul was truly happy in God, only when those impressions to preach were upon me ; and then, my fear to comply, and my fear not to comply, straitened me, so that for some whole days I could not work ; I would set down and weep, and pray the Lord to take those impressions from me. But when I came to meeting, and got engaged in prayer and exhortation, my soul would be upon the wing again. I knew I had peace with God, and fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, and with the Holy Ghost. But still I would plead to be excused from preaching. Some of my brethren would say, after we had a good meeting, "You ought to preach." I said, "I am not fit." Then they would say, "Ah ! well, the Lord is calling you to it, and you will have to come to it at last." I said, "I cannot travel, and preach." They said, "O but we don't want you to travel." I said but little to them. But I thought this is strange ; I have never said any thing to any one of my impressions ; no, not to my wife. Indeed I dare not, for fear the duty would be plain to me, and I should have to travel and preach before I had paid for my farm, and made provision for my wife and children, &c. For I considered if my call were to preach, it was also to travel. And many times after I had gone from a good meeting, I would have no more happiness until I came to meeting again. I had persuaded myself that the impression to preach was not of God

from the consideration that I was not holy enough to administer the sacraments. But this plea was taken from me, so that I dare not make it any more before God, on this wise: one night (after a very happy day in communion with God) I dreamed that I came out of a woods, into an open field of most delightful green pasture, where I saw all the members of my class were assembled around a table. My heart leaped for joy to see them. I asked them why they were there. They said, "brother, we have been waiting for you to come and administer the sacrament to us; we have the elements of bread and wine here all prepared; and we want you to make the prayer of consecration, and administer it to us; for the Lord has made us all happy." I thought I saw all their spirits shining with love to God; and I was also very happy, so that I could not resist with any propriety. I therefore said, let us pray,—we all kneeled down around the table, and I lifted up my hands and eyes to heaven, and began to pray for the presence of God to be with us; and as I looked up, I saw heaven open, and Jesus at the right hand of God, and the Heavenly hosts surrounding the throne, adoring the Father and Son in the most sublime strains.—At this sight my soul caught the heavenly fire, and I began to clap my hands, and cried out, glory, glory! glory! This awaked my wife, and she spoke, and said, "why, you are very happy." This awaked me while I was crying glory. I was sorry it was a dream; but I thought I will say nothing, and get to sleep again as quick as I can, and get into the dream again. But I thought

why has the Lord given me this blessed dream. The impression immediately came:—To show you that you ought not to object to preach, or say that you are not fit to administer the sacraments; for whom God calls, he qualifies: only trust in him, and your way will be plain. This destroyed all my sleep for that night. I lay and wept to think that so weak and ignorant a soul as I was, should be called to preach. O that I might rather die, than be a travelling preacher, thought I. Thus from the heights of happiness, I was brought into the depth of dejection. I spent most of the next day alone in the woods. I strove to work, but could not, and so for several days, I fasted and prayed, that the Lord would not take his good Spirit from me, and that he would shew me that those impressions to preach, were of nature or of the devil, and deliver me from them.

One day when at work, clearing up my fallow-ground for a crop, having as in days past, no strength to work, I thought, this will never do. I cannot work, and I am not happy in it, as in former days. I ought to be submissive to the will of God. If the Lord does call me to preach, I ought to say, "here, Lord, am I, send me." But how shall I know this is the Lord, and not a delusion? It was then suggested to my mind, "you have fasted and prayed, but you have not opened the Bible and asked for direction from the word of God." Then I kneeled down, and prayed that the Lord would direct me by his word; that if my impressions to preach were from him, I might open the Bible on some text, clearly expressing the

duty of one called of God to preach. But if not, that I might open on a text, expressing danger of running before I was sent. I then went to my house to open my Bible solemnly for an answer. But, I must confess with a secret desire, that I might be delivered from the impression to preach. When I took up my Bible, I shut my eyes and said in my heart "now, Lord, let it be a fair lot." I opened and found my finger on Ezekiel iii. 17, 18, "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the House of Israel: therefore, hear the word at my mouth and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand." I read no further, but shut up the book and left the house in haste, blaming myself for taking this measure, because now I had less ground to excuse myself than before. I got to my field again, but a gloomy horror overspread my mind more than ever. I sat down and wept; and wished the Lord would take my life. For two hours I was but a little from distraction. How can I discharge my duty and be a minister? I must pay for my farm, and get something for my wife and children to subsist upon, or it will be said, I am worse than an infidel, if I provide not for my own household. But to feel as I do, I cannot work. I fear if I preach, I shall not do my duty; and I fear if I do not, I shall be damned after all. O, if Calvinism were true, that I could not fall from grace, I could

easily overcome this distress by leaving all to the irresistible grace of God, and say, "once in grace always in grace." But I am torn and racked in every way. Thus I struggled, until exhausted with fatigue, I went and lay down on the damp ground, praying the Lord to take my life, and have mercy on my soul. I was in hopes I should take cold and die. I dare not go into the house, lest my wife would ask me what was the matter, and I should have to tell her my exercises. I slept about an hour and an half on the damp ground, and awoke much refreshed in body; and like a child that had been whipped, more soft and docile in temper. I prayed, and begged of the Lord to forgive my refractory temper. I felt ashamed of what I had done. I went to my work, but I could not work; then I again prayed; and at this time I resolved to go to the house, and ask my wife to open the Bible with her eyes shut, and put in her finger, and read the verse her finger was upon, and if it was a call to the work of the ministry, I would receive it; I would no more resist, nor Jonah-like run from the Lord. I went in, and informed her of my distress for the first time I ever spoke to her about it, and how I had resisted the impression, until like Jonah, "I was in misery, and could do no work." I have fasted and prayed for an answer that would solve the doubt, and now I have come in to have you open the Bible, shutting your eyes, until you place your finger on a text, and read the text your finger is on. She took the Bible and opened it in a hurry, without shutting her eyes,

on John x: 13, and read, "The hireling fleeth because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep." I said, "my dear, you knew where that text was, and you opened to it to reproach me for not having yielded to the duty; besides you did not shut your eyes, and it is not a fair lot." She smiled to see me so earnest. I said, "how dare you smile so before God? Why this is an awful, solemn time—you ought not to smile." I took the Bible, and said, "now let there be a fair lot, shut your eyes." She did so, and opened on Luke ix: 60, and read, "Jesus said unto him, let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." I said, "why, my dear, there is no such text in the Bible, you have made it." She burst into tears, reaching me the Bible, saying, "there, read it." While I was reading it, to my utter amazement, she said, "I knew you would have to preach! I have given you up a long time ago." I said, "Well, this is of God, let us pray." So we kneeled down, and all my horror of mind was gone in a moment—my soul was now again happy in God; though I mourned that I should have been unyielding to the impressions that had long followed me. I prayed the Lord to forgive the stubbornness I had been guilty of. I said, "I will preach as well as I can, I will not refuse again, if I am called upon." So I yielded and gave myself up, poor, and weak, and simple as I was; even less than the least of all. The text, "Let the dead bury their dead," was opened and applied to me thus: "I owed a debt; that I must see it paid." This to me was as one

dead, that I had to bury it, and my farm was as another dead; now sell the farm and pay the debt. So I said to my wife, "this is the way I must do;" and I determined to sell and clear off all debts, and trust in the Lord for my support; live or die, I will be for God. I had promised the Lord that I would preach the first time I was called upon in his providence, whether I had license from the Quarterly-Meeting Conference or not. And it was not long before I was invited by Mr. H——, (who kept a tavern on Hinsdale-Flats, and was a professed Deist,) to hold a meeting at his house the next Sabbath. I thought I would say as usual, "I don't preach, but I exhort the people to quit their sins." "Well," he said, "I wish you would hold a meeting with us." I replied, "well, give it out for next Sabbath, 10 o'clock." So he did; and I attended. But when I came in sight of his house, all of a sudden it came to my mind, that that was the house I was to be invited to preach in first; and now you have promised God that you will preach the first time you are invited. I said to myself, "true, I have, but I was not invited to preach, only to hold a meeting there; but if the way opens to preach, I'll preach, if the Lord gives me a text." That moment these words sweetly impressed my mind, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." I said, "glory be to thy name, O my God, for this text." So I rode on to the house; many had come to meeting. Mr. H—— met me, and ordering the ostler to

put out my horse, he took me into a private room, and said, "several persons that have come to meeting, have desired me to ask you to take a text, and preach to us to-day." I said, "well, if the Lord gives me a text, for I can do nothing in my own strength." He said, "but we think you can preach, we know you." "Well," I said, "we must do as the Lord directs." But I thought, surely I am not only called by the Lord through his people, but now a deist is calling me. Well, all this is of God; so we went into his large room, where the people were seated; and among them, I saw the man that was to be awakened and converted by my preaching in that house. I looked at him, and thought sure as there is a God in heaven, you will be convicted to-day. I felt the power of God upon me. I took my stand, and called the people's attention to the worship of God. We sung a hymn. I prayed; and when I arose I found some in tears, and all were solemn. I gave out, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God!" I observed, my text was a part of the first sermon our Lord preached on the Mount, which sermon contains the whole gospel. And the words of my text, I should improve to shew; first, what was implied in being 'pure in heart,' and the means to obtain it; and second, the consequent blessing to the 'pure in heart.' They are blessed, and 'they shall see God.'

This discourse was attended with a divine blessing. The dear old man, Mr. W ——, that was marked out to me to be converted through my preaching,

was in tears the most part of the meeting; and many others were deeply affected by the word. And Mr. W ——, afterwards informed me of the effect the word had upon his mind, and the peace he had obtained through faith in the word. About six months after, he was taken sick, and died happy in the Lord. On witnessing so clear a fulfilment of the revelation I had when twelve years old, and being filled with love to God and all mankind, I felt confirmed that my call to preach was of God.

And now that I had preached was soon noised about, and I expected my father and others, would be highly offended with me. But our good Congregational minister spoke so favorable of me, that none felt disposed to be severe upon me. My father became greatly changed in his mind towards me, and sent for me to come and see him. When I saw him I found he wanted to express his grief that he had not given his children a better education, and because I now labored under great disadvantages by his neglect. I desired him not to reproach himself with any neglect in my education, for I had nothing to accuse him with. Considering the circumstances and difficulties he labored under, I thought he could not have done better. "As it respects myself," I said, "it is true my education is very poor for so great a work, as that to which I think I am called. But God hath called some ignorant and unlearned men to the ministry, since the days of Peter and John." Acts iv: 13. He said, "yes; I believe it, and I don't know who are the most suita-

ble. The Lord knows best." Thus my father manifested a reconciliation to me; and expressed a desire that I might be blessed in the work. So I had his good wishes and nothing more; which was a great comfort to me. I believe he would have helped me to some property, if he had not lost what he had soon after.

About this time my dear step-mother, who never had a witness of her acceptance with God, now stated to me her distress of mind. And we set up all night to weep, and talk, and pray together; and it pleased God to make her strong in faith, and joyful in hope. It was about two o'clock in the night when the light of truth made her soul to rejoice in God her Saviour. Then we were so happy we wanted no sleep, but only to rejoice in the Lord. Thus we spent all the night. Glory to God, this labor was sweet to my soul, my dear step-mother was instrumental of good impressions on my mind in early life, and now the Lord has made me instrumental of her conversion from darkness to light. This thought cheered my spirits. Ignorant and weak, as I am in literature, God is with me, and I hope to be wise unto salvation.

After I had preached several times, I applied to brother SPRY, (who was then the preacher on our circuit) for license. I said, I believe I have transgressed the rule of discipline in preaching without a license. He said we are sometimes obliged to violate the letter of discipline before we can know whether a person ought to be licensed; for we cannot tell

whether a man can preach until we hear him; so that these violations are not against the spirit of discipline. I was pleased with this distinction, and concluded my preaching without license, would not be considered so headlong a piece of business, as I had apprehended. This matter was attended to, and I received a regular license.

And now my way was open. But O my weakness, my weakness. I soon found I had nothing but the Lord to depend upon for matter and manner. Though I studied hard at nights, (as I must work all day) I could not make a sermon. And though sometimes I studied out the method of preaching on several texts, yet when I came to meeting there was not one of them that would suit the occasion; and many times I had to preach as well as I could, on a text I had never till a little before had impressed on my mind for the subject matter of discourse. Some times I thought I made out well in preaching: and sometimes poor enough. And sometimes my poor discourses were highly spoken of by the people, and some souls were awakened and converted by them. And sometimes apparently my good discourses had no good effect at all, and were thought little of by the people. Well, thought I, this is according to Scripture, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." But my weakness almost discouraged me at times: for I had not then heard the good effect my weak sermons had, so that I began to grow gloomy and discouraged, until I attended the Quarter-

ly meeting in Pittsfield. At the prayer meeting in the evening it was proposed to have a local preacher deliver us a sermon. He was a stranger to me ; and as he appeared to be a solemn, gracious, good man, I was much pleased with the hope of a good time : but when he commenced his discourse, I perceived he was a weak brother. And as he progressed, I was confirmed that he was very weak, and before he was done, I concluded that he was weaker than I was ; and surely, I thought if I was as weak as he was, I would never attempt to preach again. Well, our meeting closed, and I went to my lodgings, with a sad heart, to think no good was done that night. But next morning, to my surprise, I heard that five persons who heard our weak brother the night before, were converted. I said nothing : but hid my face in my hands, and thought, truly these are thy marvellous works, O Lord. Thou dost make use of things which are not to bring to nought things that are, and to *confound the mighty*. Well, I must take courage : and if I cannot shine in gifts, let me shine in humility and adorn myself in a meek and quiet frame of mind, which is an ornament in the sight of God, of great price. Then I shall, like this weak brother, be instrumental of good to the souls purchased by a Saviour's blood. This encouraged me to be more fervent in prayer, and diligent in study. I had read all Mr. FLETCHER's works, many of Mr. WESLEY's, the Saint's Rest, many Histories, and Biographies, and some volumes of Natural and Moral Philosophy, EDWARD's works, BELAMY,—and Bos-

TON's Fourfold State, and many other books, besides magazines and other periodical works. But my Bible was the best book of all. After all my study, and advantage of some anotations, I could rarely premeditate a discourse that I could have liberty to deliver with life and animation, to myself or the auditory. I concluded, however, that to neglect study would be a great sin, and so to depend on a studied discourse, that I should confine myself to it, would also be a sin ; I therefore concluded it was my duty to study closely, and pray fervently, and always look to the Lord by faith for help.

CHAPTER VIII.

I PREACHED about in the adjoining towns two years before I got prepared to travel. But in this preaching, I met with some difficulties ; though many were the invitations to come and preach to the people in the different towns, yet none saw fit to contribute any thing to bear my expense ; except they would say, " well, brother HIBBARD, may the Lord reward you for all your labors. I hope you will come again." This I thought was better than nothing, though it would not pay a gate fee, nor shoe my horse. But I worked hard, and had good crops ; so I had enough to eat, and feed our preachers and their horses. The members of our class were almost all poor, but loving and kind. We had a gradual increase. Some extraordinary conversions. None joined us but what experienced religion, either before or soon after they joined. My health was better than it had been, but I found it too much to work hard all day, and attend meetings nights, sometimes till twelve or one o'clock. However, I thought if the Lord will convert souls, I would willingly wear myself down. We had solemn meetings, and all appeared alive to God.

One conversion was a little singular, of a man who

lived about four miles off, with whom I was some acquainted when I was a boy. He came to me one day when I was in my cornfield. He inquired first about my temporal affairs, like a man of business, and conversed about his working at my father's when I was a boy, and enquired after his welfare, &c. At last he said, " I hear that you hold meetings here." I said " yes." " And I understand," said he, " you take in members for six months." I said, " yes, six months' probation." He said, " I have a thought to join for six months." I said, " have you a desire to ' flee the wrath to come,' and be saved from your sins ?" He said, " I have not any concern for my soul now. I had some days ago, but it is all gone now ; only I know that I have been a swearer, and often got drunk, and have been given to card playing ; and some time ago, I felt a little conviction, that I should de damned, if I did not leave off this course ; but now it is all gone ; and I heard that you took in members for six months, and as I had been acquainted with you some, I thought I would come and try it for six months." This relation struck me with some amazement ; but as he appeared to be honest, I did not like to suspect he was trifling with me ; but I thought I will be as honest as he appears to be. So I asked him if he knew the rules of discipline ? He said, "No, I only heard you had good meetings here." " Well," I says, " come with me into the house, and I will read the rules, and then you will see whether you can attend to them or not." So he readily went with me. I set him a chair and sat down by him,

and read the rules, and added also a rule we had in our class, not only to pray morning and evening in our families, but twice every day in secret, and in the meetings whenever I called upon them. Then I said, "do you think you can live up to these rules?" He said, "yes, I will try it for six months." My wife looked with amazement upon us. I said, "the six months is only the time of probation; we expect those who join us, will continue all the days of their life." He said, "I should not like to engage longer than six months at first." "Well," I said, "I will speak to the class, and the preachers about it, and you must be faithful to observe all the rules." He said, "yes," and appeared satisfied, as though he had made a good bargain. I mentioned this to the members of the class, and we all thought it best to humor the case as though it was a legal procedure. The next Sabbath he came to meeting; and just before meeting he gave me a token to speak with me in private. We went aside, and he began to give an account of himself. He stated that he had not prayed in his family yet. I said, "I am sorry for that neglect." He said, "my father lives with me, and he prays in the family." I said, "very well, what more?" He said, "I have prayed twice every day, in secret, but I did not feel any thing, except one day I went to my barn and got on the scaffold to be in secret, and while in prayer, my heart was melted into tenderness for about two hours, but then it was all gone again, and I have felt none of it since." I said, "well, I hope you will feel it again; come, it is

time to go into meeting; you must pray in the meeting to-day, when I call upon you." He said, "I am not fit." I said, "I cannot help that, you have joined for six months, and you have promised to be faithful." He followed me in, and looked very sad. After several had prayed, I called on him to pray: He began, and his prayer was almost all confession of his sins. Like the publican, he cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner." All his muscles and features were distorted—he was in an agony; in some of his ejaculations he bounded on his kness full two inches from the floor, and being a heavy man, he made the house jar. The brethren hearing and seeing his agony, poured out their prayers in strong cries and tears. We had an awful solemn time. I thought surely the damned in hell, do not cry more earnestly for water, than he does for mercy; and they have no promise of obtaining one drop; but this poor soul has a promise of obtaining mercy. And so it was; though it was some days before he had the witness of the pardon of his sins, yet he was blessed; and then he came forward and said, "now I want to join for all the days of my life." And he brought a number with him to join for six months, for he supposed that was the way, to join till they were converted. But with some labor, I convinced them of the true sense of joining. This mistaken notion, however, served to encourage some to come forward and inquire what they should do to be saved, and fourteen experienced religion in a few months.

This man was a great help to me. Besides many

presents he gave me, he also furnished me with a horse to ride the first year and a half of my travelling, for which I was very welcome and thankful.

Many were the difficulties attending my setting out to travel. All my brethren were unwilling that I should leave the place. They therefore opposed me, and all my neighbors around joined to oppose me. Mr. E——, a rich farmer, who made no profession o religion, came to me, and said, "I think you ought not to travel and preach. I cannot see how you can support your family. Your discipline says, a travelling preacher can receive only so much, and no more, for salary. This would not support your family. But I understand the collections are not sufficient to pay half that; and I do not see how you can keep the covenant you made with your wife in marriage; you solemnly promised to provide for her; and the Scriptures say, 'He that provideth not for his own household, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.'" I replied, "it is true, the provision for the support of a Methodist preacher, is small at best, and very uncertain; but you know, any labors we engage in, in this world, are very uncertain. A Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, and none but God can give the increase. Now, I have thought, if I am called to preach, as I think I am, I am also called to travel; and if I should not obey God in this, he would curse me, soul and body; and if he should blast my grain, and fix sickness upon me, or my family, I then cannot provide for my household; but if I travel, and suffer for his glory, I can trust him

for a reward. And if, in reality, I find he does call me, I then can provide for my family according to the will of God: but if I am mistaken, and these impressions are not from God, I at least ought to obey the precept which says, '*try the spirits;*' and if I find upon trial, that I am mistaken, I can then come home and be content. And I think you will all say I have been sincere." He said, "well, I have no more to say. I cannot say those impressions you speak of are notfrom God."

My wife's mother, who was talkative and positive, frequently visited us, but was very shy and artful to evade a serious conversation with me about the concern of her soul. But one day a little before I began to travel, she came to see us. I sat down, resolved to hold her to a conversation; I said, "mother, I want to talk with you." She said, "yes, child, I am willing to talk with you about any thing." I said, "well, mother, why don't you pray to God, and get your soul converted?" She said, "why, I can't convert my soul." I said, "well, that made me say, why don't you pray to God, and get him to convert your soul?" She said, "ah! he'll convert my soul in his own due time, when he pleases." I said, "don't you think God is willing to convert you now?" She said, "No! if he was willing, I should be converted, for he is able to do it, and none but God can." I said, "mother, I called to see the Rev. Mr. L——, yesterday, and had a long conversation with him." She said, "did you? well, he is a fine man. I think he is one of the finest men in the world. If any man

is perfect, I think he is." I said, "yes, mother, I think so too. I think he is more perfect than God." She said, "oh! no! what do you mean? I said, "why, mother, don't you think Mr. L—— is willing that all the souls in his town should be converted? And if he had power to convert them, don't you think he would convert them all before Saturday night?" She said, "yes, I do." I said, "well you say God has power, but is not willing; now don't you think that Mr. L—— has a better disposition towards mankind than God has. She looked with surprise; tears started from her eyes, and she said, "I never saw it so before." My wife spoke and said, "mother, I have often said you did not see into it, nor understand the Methodist doctrine of good works, nor of perfection." She said, "why, don't you hold to the merit of works?" I said, "no; we say, 'not by the merit of works, but by works as a condition.' The Lord commands us to ask that we may receive, to seek that we may find," &c. She now desired to read some of our books. I gave her the discipline, containing some doctrinal tracts. Her conviction increased so, that she shut herself up in her room day after day to read it, and to read the Bible and pray. Now all her weapons of opposition were taken away; she sought the Lord, and I trust she experienced the converting love of God shed abroad in her heart by the Holy Ghost. She afterwarsd joined the Baptist church in Pompey.

While one opposer after another were turned to the Lord, and became friendly to me, they joined with

others to oppose my travelling; but all their solicitations to abide among them, did not weigh so heavy on my mind, as the consideration of duty to provide for my family. The economy of the Methodists left all in entire uncertainty respecting the support of their preachers. The utmost that was promised was a bare supply of necessaries, and this uncertain; so that I must reconcile myself to be poor all the days of my life, without the least prospect of ever obtaining the conveniences of this life. I asked myself the question, "is it pride that makes me loathe and abhor a life of beggary?" Pride is a vice, not a virtue; and it appeared to me this loathing I felt of a beggarly dependance, was not sinful. However, this troubled me at times with fear, that my heart was not right with God, until I was taught to see, that the words *pride* or *ambition*, ought to be used in a qualified sense. If ambition is exercised in lawful things, it is a virtue. If unlawfully, that same ambition is pride,—a vice. We make ourselves vicious by transgressing the law of rectitude, that God hath ordained and revealed by the Gospel. Ambition is one property of our nature; and there is nothing wrong in what God has created. The abuse of the gifts of God corrupts them; therefore, to discharge our duties merely to be seen of men, and to gain the praise and honors of the world, is hypocrisy and pride. But to do the same duties with a single intention to glorify God among men, is piety and virtue. But my ignorance of the sciences—I was not acquainted with the classics—I was no critic in

any language—all conspired to dishearten me.—However, my love to God, his word and his people, and ardent desire to persuade men to be reconciled to God; all conspired to encourage me,—while the impression, "Wo is me if I preach not the Gospel," served to drive me to the conclusion, that necessity was laid upon me. My dear wife, instead of desiring me to stay at home, exhorted me to trust in the Lord, and be faithful to my duty; she assured me that no thing could induce her to give me up, to leave her as I must, if I travelled, but a conviction that I was called of God, and said, "if you are faithful to God, he will take care of me and the children." Often I have heard her say, "though I suffer hardship and trials here, because my husband is called from me, my soul rejoices in the anticipation, that all the souls converted through his instrumentality, will be as stars in the crown of his rejoicing in glory; and if I am faithful, I shall share with him, and have some stars in my crown."

My wife was no hindrance to me, but suffered as patiently as could be expected. However we are not to expect patience that never finds fault with any thing, either in man or woman.

Though my difficulties were many, by reason of my ignorance and poverty, yet I left all and went on to Pittsfield circuit, with brother STEBBINS, by the direction of the presiding elder, in the year 1797, and travelled with him until sometime in June, 1798; then I went to Litchfield circuit, until the conference in Granville, September, 1798, when I was received by the conference, and appointed to Dutchess circuit.

The time of holding the annual conference in September, was this year altered to May or June.

On Pittsfield and Litchfield circuits, I was kindly received by many; but deism was prevailing. Mr. THOMAS PAINE's Age of Reason, was highly thought of by many, who neither knew what the age they lived in, or reason was. Universalism was prevailing also; but all agreed to prove their theories by the principles of fate, and smooth a life of sin. Mr. HUNTINGTON wrote a posthumous piece to prove Universalism; he entitled it *Calvinism Improved*. In this improvement he only had to dash out Reprobation and make all Elect; and then prove that God decreed all things whatsoever comes to pass. By this scheme, all were elected; good, bad, and indifferent. Mr. HOPKINS, also wrote ingeniously about 1790, to improve Calvinism; his system was called *New Divinity*, for a while, but soon changed its name to Hopkinsianism. He held that God moved, and excited men to do that which is sinful; and that he "put sin into the heart, by a *positive creative influence*." And yet he held that men had a natural ability to love and serve God; and at the same time a moral inability to love and serve God. He taught that Christ died for all, and that all may come, and yet, that the reprobates never can come. Finally, the opinion prevailed among many, that both sides of a contradiction was true, and that the safest way was not the best way, nor the best way, the right way. The marks of distinction between good and evil, right

and wrong, truth and falsehood, were thrown into confusion. Deism improved this nonsense, to ridicule all religion, and make it a phantasm. The Deists would have embraced Universalism; but the Universalists professed to receive the scripture as a revelation from God; and the Deists held it to be inconsistent with common sense to believe that the Deity should decree whatsoever comes to pass, and then give the scripture as a revelation of his will, for the government of his creatures. It was easy to prove that the one contradicted the other. God had said to ADAM, "Of all the trees of the garden, thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou mayest not eat; for on the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Now, here was a revelation, that God was not willing ADAM should eat of this tree. But it came to pass that he did eat of it. And if God had decreed all things whatsoever comes to pass, he had decreed that he should eat of it. Therefore, the revelation that he should not, contradicted the decree that he should eat. And as reasonable men would not profess what they could not believe, viz. that both sides of a contradiction could be true, they would not believe the revelations made by the Scripture, because it contradicted their favorite doctrine of fate. Deism, therefore, may be a rough improvement of Calvinism; and too rough to be allowed by those Calvinists, who with soft sounding titles, would smooth their notions of what honest JOHN CALVIN calls, "an horrible decree."

It could not be supposed, that so weak an instrument

as I was, could make any great impression on the minds of the many logicians, (for almost all professed a smattering in logic.) However, the Lord was pleased to own my weak labors and make them instrumental in the conversion of many. I think more than one hundred were awakened on these two circuits. But some joined the Presbyterians, and some the Baptists, and some the Methodists. The work of God in convicting, and converting, and sanctifying souls, was very evident. Persecution raged some on Litchfield circuit. The work of God was manifested in power, —sometimes they fell as one shot down in battle, and would lay without strength from half an hour, to two hours, when they would arise happy in God. Our Presbyterian brethren and others, were afraid it was a delusion. We prayed that the same power might be among them; and in one town, some were powerfully wrought upon. One young woman fell in their meeting, and they carried her out to a private house near by, and sent for a doctor. He said he could not rightly tell what was the matter, but he thought it best to bleed her; and while cording her arm, she came too so as to speak, and cried out, "nothing but the blood of Christ can do me any good." This made them give over bleeding her; and many were less prejudiced against the Methodists. Many cases similar to this occurred in different places. And a revival of religion, having those extraordinary signs attending it, was highly necessary to confound dead formality. Some conversions were extraordinary. In one place I preached in a private house, where the man and his

wife and one neighbor, made all the congregation. The man and his wife professed religion, but their neighbor did not. However, before I came again in four weeks, that person was converted, and had reported around, by what means this work was wrought; so that thereby many others came out, and I had about seventy to preach to, instead of three; and before long, many could testify that God for Christ's sake, had made that preaching, which some call foolishness, the happy power of salvation to their souls.

After the conference, I went to Dutchess circuit, to travel with brother J. R. He appeared to be a softly colleague, but a prudent, careful man. I thought he was a little afraid of the power of God. But on farther acquaintance, I found he had not been endued with much energy of spirit, and his bashfulness was a let to him. However, we travelled in good harmony; and some few souls I trust were converted. We thought about eighty were brought from the power of sin and satan to God.

At the conference, in May or June 1799, I was appointed to Cambridge circuit, with my old colleague J. R. To remove my family from Dutchess county, one hundred, or one hundred and fifty miles, among entire strangers, and without money to support them, was a serious business for me. I had lived in Clintontown, in brother Lyon's neighborhood; and had received eighty-four dollars of collection, for the past nine months; and for the twenty months past, I had received only one hundred and thirty-three dollars. In those days, we gave an account for all presents, and

one hundred and thirty-three dollars, was all I had received, so that I was short of money. The little I had of my own property, was nearly all gone, and I had not enough to pay my expenses for moving with the most rigid economy. To look forward, gloomy clouds hung over my prospects. I had moved but a little before, from Washington, on Granville circuit, state of Massachusetts. And now again, to some part of Cambridge circuit, I knew not where, was a serious business, for one without funds. I looked at my call to this work, to be of God. And I said in my heart, and to my dear wife, to God I will look for support. My wife encouraged me to suffer with patience. She often said, "if we can do our duty to God here, and be a means of saving some souls, and get to heaven at last, all our sufferings will work together for our good." Ah! thought I, you are a dear soul; what husband would not want to live at home, and enjoy the society of such a wife. But the Lord calls me to leave wife and children,—and for his sake I give all up.

I went to Rhinebeck to see Bishop Asbury, and it was refreshing to my soul, to have the counsel of the fathers in Israel. The Bishop several times asked me if I was well; and others present, gave it as their opinion, that I did not look well. I said, "yes, I am well." The Bishop then asked if my appointment suited me, I said, "yes:"—but the truth was, the dificulties of moving my family, without money to defray the expenses, was my trouble.

I left my family in Dutchess county, until I should

go to my circuit, and find a place to which I might move them. When I arrived at Pittstown, I inquired for some place to accommodate my family; but there was no house to be hired. The brethren proposed to throw up a log-house for me, which was the best they could furnish, if I could not get a better at Ashgrove. So I rode on from one appointment to another, preaching in every place, and inquiring for a house to put my family in, but could find none. I came to Ashgrove, and could find none there. I then sent to Pittstown, desiring the brethren to build me a log-house; but when I came around the circuit they had done nothing about it; but they expressed a desire to accommodate me. I then concluded to return to Dutchess county, and sent my goods on to Troy by water, and take my wife and children, of which we had three, JOHN, WILLIAM, and WESLEY, and go to her father's in Berkshire county, Massachusetts, and leave them for a visit, until my log-house was fit to live in, which we supposed would be in six weeks. So I went on having had good meetings. I arrived at Dutchess —found my family well, and some converted in different places on the circuit, while I was gone; these were some with whom I had covenanted to pray for them once a day, before I left them. And the few days I spent on Dutchess circuit before I moved, were in rejoicing with those that rejoice. The conversion of one, was a little singular. Having made a covenant with her and some others, to pray for them at the going down of the sun, and they also were to retire in secret, and pray for themselves. It

was so one day, while I was gone, that I had to preach in Alington, in Vermont, at so late an hour of the day, that I was about half through my discourse at the going down of the sun; when a concern for those I had covenanted with, impressed my mind with peculiar weight. I stopped and informed the congregation of the obligations I was under, to pray for some souls under concern on Dutchess circuit, where I travelled last year; and as I could not well retire for prayers, I would beg the indulgence of the congregation about ten minutes, while I kneeled down and prayed for them. I then kneeled down and prayed, and the power of God came upon me, and all present, so that we were greatly affected—many were in tears. I had the witness that I was heard in heaven, and that some were converted. My mind centered on this one; and when I was informed by the parents of the blessing EUNICE had obtained, and the time when, I was joyfully surprised, that it happened precisely at the time I detained the congregation to pray for her. It may seem a little odd, that a preacher should stop in the middle of a sermon to pray for some persons by name. But I believe signal good was done; for our religious devotion was enlivened, and our hearts were warmed with an increase of love to God, and his cause, by this means.

After sending my household goods on board a sloop bound to Lansingburgh, I took my wife and children to her father's in Hinsdale, and left them while I could go around the circuit, and give time to finish my log-house. But when I came to Pittstown, I

found the brethren had given up the plan of building me a log-house, so my goods were in one place, and my family in another, and I had not a house to put them in. Well, thought I, the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but I have not even a log-house. I am now tasting of my Master's fare. He suffered this for the good of souls, and O what an honor that I may suffer a little with my Master. So I went on cheerful, trusting in the Lord. We had refreshing seasons; many were awakened, and, I trust, converted. I met my colleague, and informed him that I could get no house on the circuit to put my family in. He groaned; and to my surprise informed me, that he was discouraged. He owed some for his horse, and he appeared scared at poverty. I tried to encourage him; he had no wife and family to provide for, and with prudent care he could pay his debts. But all in vain, though I offered to give him ten dollars, he was resolved to go home to New Jersey, and go into business to pay his debts like an honest man. This was a heavy trial to me, to leave the charge of the circuit upon me, and I had no house for my family.

Our circuit at that time, was five hundred miles around it, and for me to preach as I did sixty-three sermons in four weeks, and travel five hundred miles, was too hard. But I cried unto the Lord and he heard me; for as my day was, so was my strength. I had an impression that if I sent to a place then called Bethlehem, near Greenbush, I could find a house to put my family in; among some people I had got acquainted with when I travelled Pittsfield circuit. I therefore desired brother R. to go there for me on his way home. And my faith was so strong, that I should at least get a log-house to live in, among that poor and loving people, that I wrote to one I knew to provide for me there, and make ready to bring my goods by the day I set to move my family. And so it was; bro. R. on leaving the circuit, performed this good work for me; and I was able to attend all my appointments, and move my family on my rest week within forty-five miles of Ashgrove, from which I had to ride to visit them on my rest week. Our circuit had been a six weeks circuit before bro. R. left us, and we had taken bro. Henry Ryan, for the third preacher. But now to supply sixty-three appointments in four weeks, and ride five hundred miles, was too much; we therefore gave off some to another preacher. But my ride was more than five hundred miles in four weeks if I visited my family, which I did faithfully, and we had a little log-house, among a loving people, in Bethlehem. When I was first acquainted with this class about a year before, there was only eight members. We lived with them two years, and when we moved away, the number in class was eighty-four: so mighty was the work of God in this place.

On Cambridge circuit, the Lord wrought wonders. About three hundred, I believe, were awakened and converted, though the nett increase was not quite two hundred, for many moved away, and some died, so

that to supply those vacancies, would require the full number of three hundred, to give us what increase we had. Brother RYAN was in good health and high spirits, for this great work. The persecution in Thurman's Patent where we had lived, was truly grievous. Many young people that experienced religion, were turned out of doors by their parents. Some of them were whipped cruelly: two young women were so whipped by their father, that the blood run down from their backs to their feet, and he then turned them out of doors, and they walked fifteen miles to a Methodist society. When they recovered of their wounds, some of our sisters informed me that they had many scars, some five inches long. Their two young brothers, one fourteen, and the other twelve years old, had both experienced religion through the instrumentality of the Methodists. Their father forbade their going to the Methodist meeting, they entreated him to let them go, but he was inflexible; he was a member of the kirk of Scotland; and said he became bound by an oath in their baptism, to bring them up Presbyterians. Therefore, he forbade them the privilege of the Methodist meetings; however, they came to our meetings, and he then whipped them severely, for what he called disobedience. They afterward came privately, ere long he found it out, and he whipped them again. They contrived every means to get to meeting, and received many whippings: until at last, they concluded that as all their secret plans were found out, they would go openly to hear preaching at stated hours. They

had only attended prayer meetings for some time before, where their oldest brother officiated as leader, sometimes at his own house, and sometimes in the woods to accommodate them. But one day as I rode past their father's house to go to my appointment at their elder brother's, they asked me what time meeting would commence; I told them; and asked them if they thought to come,—they said "yes;" I said "will not your father whip you?" they said, "yes; but we think we will take another whipping, we want to go to meeting so much." I dared not advise them to go, for fear I should seem to countenance a disobedience to parents—and I dared not advise them not to go, lest I should be found fighting against God: but I prayed for them heartily, and said, "let the Lord do what seemeth him good." I exhorted them to be faithful, to live humble and lovingly, and serve the Lord in spirit and in truth.

They came to meeting, and a most melting, powerful time we had. The Lord made bare his arm. Some mourning souls were made to rejoice, and to own the Lord Jesus as their Saviour from sin. The two boys were very happy. I was affected after prayer, to hear one of them break out in prayer with streaming eyes. He began with expressions of gratitude in these words: "I thank thee, O Lord, that I am permitted to meet once more with thy children." Seeing him in tears, and hearing this hearty thanksgiving, affected me exceedingly. How thankful this child is for this privilege, though he knows he must be whipt for it. How many children would please

their parents, if they would solemnly attend the worship of God. But alas! they are strangers to the blood that bought their pardon on the tree. O did the people know the pardoning love of God, it would be more than their meat and drink, to worship and bow down, and kneel before the Lord their Maker. But ignorance of God and religion is the great evil prevailing in the world. How shall I proclaim:

"Jesus the name high over all,
In hell or earth or sky:
Angels and men before it fall,
And devils fear and fly."

It astonished me that a father of ten children, eight of whom had experienced religion, should drive six from his house, and whip these two boys, for no other crime in reality, than because they worshipped God with the Methodists. Is it possible, that Scotch Presbyterians possess so much prejudice? And they who pleaded the rights of conscience in Puritanical days, should now deny that right to others? I was informed that this man attended the Methodist meeting at first, and pronounced the work to be of God, rejoiced also in the conversion of his children, until the Methodists formed a class, and then he turned his tune.

I was in hopes the Lord would deliver these dear boys from a cruel and unnatural persecution; but I was informed before I came around my circuit again, that he had whipped them severely. I thought it my duty to call and see their father, and if possible persuade the old man to allow his children to come to meeting. But when I entered his house, it being

a cold day, I drew near the fire and sat down. He was walking the room with a great staff. He said, "I don't know you, sir." I told him my name, and said, "I am the Methodist preacher that travels on this circuit." He said, "I don't want a Methodist preacher to come into my house." I said, "O Mr. C., I have not come in to injure you, but being cold in riding so far, I came in to see you in a friendly way, and warm my feet by your fire." Then I hitched up towards the fire. But he brought his great staff partly over my head and struck a violent blow on the floor by my side, saying angrily, "I don't want a Methodist preacher to come into my house." I looked around upon him and said, "Mr. C. I have not come in to quarrel with you; but to talk with you in a friendly way, and warm my feet by your fire." He flourished his staff like one in a rage and brought it down by my side and said, "I say, I don't want a Methodist preacher to come into my house." I looked up and said, "Why, Mr. C., I am not your enemy, and if I was, as you are a Christian, you ought to let me warm my feet by your fire, as the Scripture saith—'if thine enemy hunger feed him, and if he thirst give him drink;' but I am not your enemy, I am your friend, sir." He said, "You Methodists are an ignorant set of men, going about deceiving the people." I said, "No, no, Mr. C., you are mistaken, the Methodists are not an ignorant people, some of them are the most learned men in the world, and they are a harmless people, that fear God, and work righteousness." He said, "You deny our Catechism." I

said, "Not all of it, sir; we believe some of it; we believe that the 'Chief end of man, is to glorify God and enjoy him for ever:' and we believe the 'benefits flowing from justification, adoption, and sanctification, are *assurances* of God's love; insomuch that we know we are born of God:' but we don't believe, "that God for his own glory, hath fore ordained whatsoever comes to pass." "Well," said he, "it is because you are ignorant. Did you ever read our great Catechism?" "I said, "Yes, sir, I have read the great Catechism, and the little Catechism too; but I cannot believe that God has fore ordained every thing that comes to pass. He said, "Well, it is because you are ignorant." I said, "Why, Mr. C., do you believe that God has decreed every thing that comes to pass?" He said, "Yes, I do; and if you were not ignorant, you would believe it too." I said, "Well, it has come to pass, that the Methodists have come into this place to preach, and many have been converted, and why do you oppose them, for God has decreed it?" He said passionately, "No, God has not decreed that neither." I said, "Well, then something has come to pass, that God did not decree." He then brought his cane down with violence close by me, and said, "I say, I don't want a Methodist preacher to come into my house, and don't you ever come into my house again." I looked up and said, "O, Mr. C., I cannot promise that, for if I am riding past your house this cold weather, and my feet should be cold, I shall want to call in, and warm them by your fire; and as you profess religion, you would not

refuse me that privilege." He flourished his cane about in a great passion. I expected he would give me a thump on the head. I thought it best to take it patiently. I sat composed and happy in mind, while I warmed myself. After which I arose, and said, "Mr. C., I am about to go, and must bid you farewell. It may be, sir, that our next meeting will be at the bar of God, where you must meet me, and there you must give account to God for what you have done; and I also, must give account for what I have done. If I am one of the least of Christ's children, how can you bear to hear the Judge say, 'I was a stranger, and ye took me not in.' I hope, my dear sir, that God will forgive you, for you know not what you are doing." After this the boys came to meeting, and before meeting commenced, they came to me all in tears and cried out, "O brother, don't curse father; don't curse him, but pray for him." I said, "No, my dear children, I must not curse him—the Gospel says, 'bless and curse not,' 'vengeance is mine,' saith the Lord, 'I will repay.'" The older brothers informed me that they with their sisters, had agreed to set apart the next Thursday for fasting and prayer for their father, and they desired me to join them in it; and they would go to their father's house, at the hour of two o'clock, all in a body to entreat him to consider his ways, and cease from persecuting the Methodists. And though I might be many miles from them on that day, yet that I would retire in secret at the hour they visited him, and pray for them and for him. We did so; and they were

faithful. With hearts all engaged in prayer for their father they entered his house, and in the most affectionate manner made known to him their tender regard for his precious soul. The power of God rested on them, insomuch that the old man was not able to answer them. But it seems he was determined to resist to the last, and his passion rose so high, that he throwed himself upon the bed and made a howling noise, while they prayed. When they found they could not obtain an impartial hearing, they left him on his bed, and the poor old man could not arise from it. Something rendered him helpless, insomuch that he was not able to whip his boys any more for worshipping God. He lived in this helpless state, eight years afterwards. I never could learn from any one what his disorder was.

From this time, the persecution began to cease in this part of the circuit; but if it declined in one place, it would increase in another; for wherever the Lord poured out his Spirit, there Satan would rage, until he was overpowered by faith and prayer.—Several instances of cruel persecution might be recorded. But what of some little scourging and contemptuous sneers! The best of all was, God was with us, and enabled us to endure it.

CHAPTER VIII.

We had some extraordinary cases of the power of God; many in our meetings fell as if slain in battle. Some old professors experienced the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, and were enabled to rejoice evermore and pray without ceasing.

One extraordinary instance of the power of God, occurred in Welch Hollow, above Fort Ann. It was at brother Wood's, the class-leader. After preaching three times that day, and having travelled about twenty miles, I went with sister W. to see her husband, who lay sick with the lake-fever, so called; and to hold a prayer meeting at his house. I found him in a high fever. His doctor was there. I asked if it would injure his patient to have a prayer meeting in his room. He said, "no, he thought not." I had learned that only one male member of society would attend. I asked sister W. and sister Rachel, a young woman that lived there, if they would pray when I called upon them. They said, yes. I said, "then I hope we shall have a profitable meeting, without my having occasion to do any more than to open and close the meeting, as I was already wearied with the labors of the day." But when I commenced

meeting, there was a black cloud arising out of the west, attended with sharp lightning, and heavy thunder. And when I had prayed, and the brother also, I called on the two sisters, but they refused. I then kneeled down to close the meeting by prayer. The thunder and rain made it very awful out of doors, and the cloud was then about over our heads. I felt uncommonly drawn out to pray for poor sinners. The fierce forked lightning and tremendous thunder at a distance, reminded us of the day of judgment. I cried mightily to God in behalf of poor sinners. And when I expressed myself in these words, "O Lord, thunder conviction to the sinner's heart," that instant the lightning, like a sheet of fire, flashed, and an awful clap of thunder shook the house. I cried out, "Glory to God! glory in the highest! O Lord, thunder conviction to every sinner's heart!" Then instantly another clap of thunder shook the house more than the first. My soul was happy beyond description. After prayer, I found the candle had gone out; I sat leaning against the wall. One lighted up the candle, another got a cup of water. I looked around to see what was the matter. And the two sisters lay as dead upon the floor; and the class-leader was getting out of bed. He said, "Don't be frightened, this is the power of God; glory to God, I am healed." At this I felt alarmed—surely, thought I, he is out of his head. But my fears were soon calmed, for he said, "Let us pray;" and he kneeled down and prayed with the voice and fervency of a man in health. While he was at prayer, his wife arose, and after he had done,

she prayed. But RACHEL did not arise, she lay from half past eight, until eleven, before all the people went away. I thought it was nothing more than a powerful operation of Divine grace. So I desired the class-leader to lay down, for I was afraid his disorder would return upon him the next day, worse than ever. But he said, "No, the Lord has healed me." Then I advised sister W. to make a bed on the floor for herself and RACHEL, and she and her son and daughter could watch with RACHEL, while brother W. and I lay down to take some sleep; for I was afraid brother W. would be worse the next day. So they complied with this advice; and when I lay down, I said to sister W., "If RACHEL don't breathe again in fifteen minutes, you must awake me." In about an half hour sister W. awaked us and said, "RACHEL is dead." I started up, and felt for her pulse, but found she had none. I perceived she had no symptoms of life, her eyes and jaws were set, and her head, neck, and arms, were cold. Sister W. said mournfully, "She is dead." I said, "You must not say so; but pray to the Lord." I ordered her to pull off her shoes and stockings, she did so, and I perceived her feet were swollen. I concluded from this symptom, that her complaint was natural. But as it had been said to be the power of God, and the people that were gone, had all witnessed that she lay as dead, I concluded that if she should be dead, the cause of religion would be reproached. I cried unto the Lord with all my heart; and said to brother and sister W., we must raise her up and rub her limbs and neck

with flannel cloths until the blood circulates. Brother W. and his son, took each an arm, sister W. and her daughter rubbed her ancles and feet, I rubbed her neck and jaws until I could open them, so as to blow down her throat to inflate her lungs. The first attempt failed. Sister W. said, "It is in vain, she is dead." I said, "don't say so, but rub away, and pray to the Lord." I should judge we had continued rubbing full two hours, before I attempted to blow down her throat the second time, when I succeeded to inflate her lungs; and she gave the first symptom of returning life, and in about twenty minutes she spake and said, "O why have I come back again?" I forbid her speaking again, and ordered her some drink. We then perceived day-light in the east; we had all worked hard. I was in a violent perspiration, but we rejoiced that Rachel was alive, and like to do well; but my fears that brother W—— would be worse, increased, and the doctor would blame us. But he said again, "I am well, the Lord has healed me." And so it was; when the doctor came, I was informed he expressed surprise that he should be so much better in one night. I was very thankful to God that this extraordinary meeting should turn out so favorably, that no scandal arose from it. But my fears were great at times. I suffered an agony of spirit, but sister Rachel lived and was happy. Brother W—— was healed, and recovered his health from that time. O what cause I had to praise God. But I did not consider this as a miracle, though I could not account it any thing less than the power of God.

The thunder was awful; and the expressions I used in prayer, were singular for the time. It was a boldness of speech that some persons might judge improper on such an occasion; but God is not as man, to judge after the manner of man, or to be offended with us for approaching the throne of grace with boldness, even in time of thunder. I was uncommonly happy during this awful scene. Many were the instances of God's power and goodness, displayed in different parts of the circuit this year; but wickedness still abounded; infidel principles made more converts to deism than the doctrines of repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, did to Christianity.

We preached in the beach woods, in a town called Palmerter, west of the Hudson river. This was a new appointment; and we could say here, as in many other places, what the Apostle said to the Thessalonians, 1 Thess. ii. 1, 2, "For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain: but even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated as ye know, at ——, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention." Here we had good prospects; thirty or forty were under good awakenings. We formed a class, and went on well; but Satan stirred up some to oppose, and to prejudice others with their reports that the Methodist preachers were unlearned and ignorant men, not fit to preach. Nearby the beach woods was a growing village, and here the good people had hired a young man from Williams-

town college, to teach their school. This young man had given out, that the Methodist preachers were an ignorant set of men, they knew nothing about *metaphysics*: and to convince the people of their ignorance, he would go to the next Methodist meeting and talk with the preacher about *metaphysics*, and make him expose his ignorance. It happened on the day of my appointment, that a great concourse of people came out with the learned young man, to hear his wise sayings on the subject of *metaphysics*. I knew not why nor wherefore so many had come together; but I preached to them as well as I could, and after I had dismissed the congregation, they all sat down. This surprised me. I thought, what now? But directly a young gentleman with powdered hair and ruffles prim, came forward to me and made a genteel bow, and said, "Sir, have you studied *metaphysics*?" I said, "I have studied that science some little." He said, "I wish to converse with you on that subject." I said, "A conversation on that subject may not be so profitable to the congregation as on some other subject." He then strutted up—put his arm a kimbo, and said, "I think, sir, we can converse to the edification of the people on the subject of *metaphysics*." I said, "Well, sir, before we begin I wish to ask you two questions, if you will answer them." He said, strutting up afresh, "Yes, sir, I will answer you any question you wish to ask me." I said, "Well, sir, which is the greatest of the five senses, hearing, seeing, tasting, smelling, or feeling?" He said, "I think seeing is the greatest of the five senses." I said, "We

shall differ about that, for I think feeling is the greatest." He said, "I had much rather be without feeling than without seeing;" strutting himself up and casting a majestic look upon the people. I said, "Sir, did you not know that if you had no feeling, you could have no sight; but you might be blind and still have feeling." He said, lowering himself down, "I *profess*, sir, you are right." I said, "You don't appear to be acquainted with *metaphysics;* these are the easiest lessons in *metaphysics*, and if you are not acquainted with the easiest lessons, I am sure you cannot understand the harder ones. But my second question is, 'have you not, sir, doubted the authenticity of the Bible, and the reality of the Christian religion?'" He said, "Yes, I *profess* I have." I said, "Well, sir, you agree with me, that feeling is the greatest of the five senses." He said, "Yes." I said, "Well, I feel that there is a reality in the Christian religion. Now, you must prove that I cannot feel this, before you can bring any well-grounded argument to disprove the reality of this religion." He said, "I will not undertake that." So here our conversation upon *metaphysics* ended. After the people were gone, I heard some few in a group at little distance, in broken accents say, "I am glad—O there was never any thing better." "O it is just right," said another. I stepped toward them, and asked them what they were talking about. They said, "that the young gentleman had given out a week ago, that he would come to talk with the Methodist preacher, upon *metaphysics*, to show the peo-

ple how ignorant the Methodist preachers were, and that made so many come out to-day," &c.

It is with grief we too often meet with men, *boasting* of their high attainments in knowledge, when they know not God at all. And sometimes we meet with men of *really* high attainments in literature, that have not the knowledge of God, and this ought to be their shame, as saith the Apostle.

I left this circuit with many tears at the close of my year, and went on to New York to attend the conference. We had a good time in our conference. I thought all things went on well. But there was not so much life in the public meetings as I expected to find; yet what there was, appeared to be very good; also much love and good will was manifested among all the preachers. Bishop ASBURY and Bishop WHATCOAT presided, and certainly they were the best of men; they appeared to have the whole work at heart, and their whole hearts in the work. Their love for the preachers was manifest in a peculiar manner. Bishop ASBURY was oldest in office, and had been longest with us. He sat as a father among his children, beloved by every one. When he prayed, he was as one conversing with a venerable friend, in which he seemed to have our interest at heart more than his own, and it encouraged us all to draw nigh to God. What a blessing to have Godly men.

At this conference I received my station on Granville circuit, with brother T. Bishop for my colleague.

We went to the circuit, and found it in a low state of religion, as might be seen by the collection

the first quarter. After paying our expenses, brother BISHOP'S quarterage was two dollars and ninety-two cents, and mine was five dollars and eighty-four cents. Brother B. was taken sick and left the circuit. And as it was doubtful whether I could have any one to help me, I altered my appointments so as to attend them all in two weeks, instead of four weeks. This was also a heavy trial to me. The last year my colleague left me, which increased my labor that was hard before; and now when I had flattered myself with the moderate labor of only preaching twenty-six times in four weeks, I was left with twelve appointments in a week, and no rest week to go home and visit my family. I therefore went home to take leave of my family, not to return again till the end of three months. But to my great joy, on returning home I found that my Presiding Elder, Brother S. BOSTWICK, had sent Brother E. WASHBURN to help me. My wife rejoiced with me to see him. So my dear brother W. and I went to the circuit together, and attended all the appointments in two weeks, altered them again to make it a four-week circuit. My family still lived in Bethlehem, about forty-five miles from the circuit. My dear wife worked hard at spinning and weaving, to procure bread for herself and children. The roof of our log house would not shed rain: therefore she suffered much at times, though she never murmured. The great object we had in view, was, to save souls. But our hired house was a poor thing in wet weather, that

she needed a double portion of patience to bear the cross. I often thought: is this the portion of the ministers of Christ? Well, truly it is through much tribulation that we are to enter into the kingdom of heaven. But all ministers do not suffer such things, which is some comfort to me.

On Granville circuit we had many new appointments; and some in places where formerly the Methodists had preached, but had desisted because of the opposition from the prejudiced and persecuting people. Sorrow filled my heart on account of the general deadness, and carnal security which prevailed. I thought surely if any mode of preaching can do good, it is to cry aloud and spare not. And as to the subject matter it must be holiness. We therefore preached, not only that men should repent, but that they should be holy, or they never could enjoy an holy God, either in this world or the world to come. But the standing order in Massachusetts and Connecticut, could not endure this doctrine. The Baptist people also, accounted the doctrine of perfection a delusion, or something not to be attained in this life, or on this side of heaven. I never could think they rejected this doctrine because they hated it; or plead for sin because they loved it. There were many pious people in each denomination, both of the ministry and laity. But they preached against this doctrine I thought, because they did not understand it. We labored to show the distinction between absolute perfection and Christian perfection, and between the perfection of angels and glorified spirits, and the perfection of Christians in a probationary state. But still the opposition was carried on with acrimony by some, as though the doctrine was a great injury to them, and cut them off from all hope of mercy. They intimated, that if this doctrine was true, they were entire strangers to religion, because they lived in sin, and knew not that they had passed from death unto life. And because they did not know their sins were forgiven, though they had long professed religion; they therefore concluded, all must be a delusion that they had no knowledge of by experience, as if their experience was the height of religion. And their ministers taught them to believe it was arrogance to profess to know that they were born of God. Therefore, the Methodists were supposed to be a presumptuous people. Some Baptists professed to know that God for Christ's sake had forgiven them their sins; and they were said to be deluded as well as the Methodists. I thought the Presbyterians professed this ignorance of God and experimental religion, only to defend their notion of unconditional perseverance. They were positive, very positive, that they could not fall from grace, though they knew not that they were in the grace of God. But others more guarded would say, "if I have grace, I cannot fall from it." This appeared to me, to be the grand delusion of the devil; under which my Calvinist brethren were suffering; for this made them doubt the witness of the Spirit of God, which beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God. The witness of this Spirit they had, if they ever enjoyed religion; but if they

had backslidden, they had lost the witness, and consequently the enjoyment of religion. Therefore to say they never had religion, was giving the Holy Spirit the lie. An affront this, and a sin against God of no small magnitude. But again they denied the doctrine of Christian perfection as held by the Methodists; and to prove there was no perfection in this life, they declared their own hearts to be sinful, and that they committed sin daily in thought, word, and deed. Thus to support their doctrine they seemed to be rather professors of sin than professors of religion. Many seemed angry at those Methodists that professed to live without sin. One asked me if I lived without sin. I said, "yes, and live very comfortable without it." He said, "he did not believe I lived without sin." I said, "do you say I sin?" He said, "yes." I asked him to prove it. He said "he could not." I said, "well, I learn from my Bible that the devil is the accuser of the brethren. He accuses them of committing sin when they have not; and it seems you are so much like the devil, that you have turned accuser too. You set up to judge who have sinned—this is very uncharitable in you." And he having said before that he sinned every breath, I had exhorted him to repent or he would be damned, so now when I accused him of uncharitableness in judging me as he did, he said, "you have judged me too". I said, "no, you judged yourself—you said you committed sin in every breath; and charity constrains me to believe you do, for you appear to be sincere in your profession. I hope, however, that

you will repent of your sincere wickedness before you die."

This pleading for sin, and professing to sin daily in thought, word and deed, gave occasion for many sinners to say they were as good as professors were, for they did not commit sin oftener than once a breath. One old Baptist minister told me that he was *chuck* full of sin, that is, sin was chinked into him so that there was no room for any thing else, at least so I understood him, for I did not think that he meant the word *chuck* signified "the voice of a hen: a word of endearment." This professing to commit sin at all times, and in every thing, even in their most holy things, gave me unpleasant feelings. I have often heard them ask the Lord to forgive the sin of their prayer; and I believe they were sincere, and really thought they committed sin. One minister in preaching against perfection, had occasion to quote Job, and said, "it is said, Job was a perfect man; but Job was not a perfect man." At which, a man that was thought to be a little deranged in mind, suddenly started up and said, "let God be true, and every man a liar. God says, Job was a perfect man."

It appeared to me that many who were well versed in literature, were nevertheless ignorant of divine theology, and verily believed that our theology was religious enthusiasm. One minister asked me one day, what I meant by perfection? I said, "the Methodists mean no more or less by Christian perfection than to love God with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the strength," &c. I then

asked him if he did not love God with all his heart? He said "no." I said, "I am sorry for that, for I think ministers ought to love God with all their heart. But pray, sir, if you do not love God with all your heart, how much of your heart do you love God with? Is it with one-half or two-thirds? If you say with one-half, then you can serve God with that half, and serve the devil with the other half, and so serve God and mammon, and when you die, one half of your heart will go to heaven, and the other half to hell. But I think, sir, you will find yourself mistaken, for our Lord says, 'ye cannot serve God and mammon.'"

Deacon J——, of Chester, said to me one day, in a positive accent, that he committed sin every minute, and this he said, to prove that my doctrine of Christian perfection was a delusion. After he was gone, a very wicked man, that had been in the company and heard the conversation, addressed himself to the man of the house in a very solemn manner, saying, "I don't believe one thing, though I know I am a sinner and live in sin every day, yet I don't believe that I *commit sin* every minute; but deacon J—— said he committed sin every minute; I think he must be a great sinner by this time; why, he is an old man. How old is he?" One answered and said, "he is eighty-two years old." "Well," said the man very solemnly, "I think it is time for him to think something about eternity."

Thus my ears were almost daily saluted with the declarations of those (that ought to be examples of piety) that they committed sin daily in thought, word,

and deed. And these declarations were so positive, and they knew so certainly that they committed sin, that I was constrained to believe that they were wicked, or question their veracity; or I must believe they were deceived, and therefore claimed my pity. This I settled in my mind, that they were deluded by the devil by false reasonings.

From this conviction, I went mourning for the unhappy state of delusion that seemed to triumph in New England over thousands. Some days when riding to my appointments, I was almost all the way in tears, often inquiring of the Lord, in ejaculatory prayers, "what can I do to save these souls from delusion?" Some threw stones at me, and some set their dogs on me as I rode along. But the Lord defended me. I never had a stone to hit me, nor a dog to bite me. Some threatened to whip me; but I escaped all. I heard of many threats, but none laid hands on me. It was told me, that when I was riding from Springfield to Westfield, a company lay in wait for me in a swamp, through which I had to ride; and they had said, they intended to whip me; but as I was passing a house, before I came to the swamp, a woman called to me and informed me that brother A—— was sick, and had sent to her to desire me to call upon him. I then turned my course and rode across lots to his house, and on leaving him, I went another road: so I escaped the mob. By this time some of our friends heard of their design, and they rode after me with all haste to Westfield, "expecting," as they said, "to find me badly bruised and

beaten." But when I told them of the way I came they rejoiced that a good providence had saved me that time. But they said they expected I should meet with trouble that night, for the house where I was to preach that evening, was near the school-house where the Methodists had formerly preached, and were persecuted and disturbed by the wicked throwing stones at the house and breaking the windows. So they thought it would be well to hope for the best and prepare for the worst.

That night when I opened meeting, and while I was in prayer, I had an impression that the Devil in some Deist, had come into the meeting. I opened my eyes while praying, to see where he was. And there sat a man in the middle of the room, glaring his eyes at me, and grinding and twisting his mouth, as though he would make sport for his companions, and dash me out of countenance. But I fixed my eyes upon him and said, "Lord God, put thy hook into the jaws of the devil to-night ; and deliver these souls from the power of sin and Satan." He soon desisted from grinding and staring upon me. When I had done prayer, he moved back to one corner of the room. My subject led me first to show what was implied in worshipping God. I said, " the first thing implied in worshipping God, is to believe there is a God ; and that he is a good God." Then I said abruptly, " do you believe there is a God ?" This man answered, " yes, I do." I made as though I did not hear him,—and went on : " If we say we believe there is a God, and that he is a good God ; do we

evidence by our works, that we believe it ? For if our works do not correspond with our profession, we are splendid hypocrites. Now, men will pay attention to objects and things, in proportion to the value they set upon them, and they value them in proportion as they esteem them good. A man will pay attention to his hogs, and will feed them twice a day, because he views them good and profitable to him. And if he believed God was as good as his hogs, he would at least pray to him twice in a day. But he does not believe it :—he is in fact like a hog, that when you throw corn to him, shows a great appetite to devour it, but never looks up to thank the hand that feeds him ; so it is with some men, they never look up to thank the Lord for the blessings he bestows." The man was feeling around for his hat, and muttering something. I spoke earnestly : " I hope no one will disturb this meeting to-night." He said, " no, but I don't mean to be called a hog." I said, " well, the coat suits you, and you have got it on. I think you have need to be thankful, that you have got dressed so soon." He muttered as he hurried through the congregation to get out. I said, " no muttering from you, you have need to be thankful, you never had a better coat in your life." But he went off muttering. The people all seemed to be amazed. I said to them, " you see the coat fitted him well, and he has worn it away ; now I must alter my manner of discourse a little, so as to fit a coat for some other, and when he is suited with one, I expect he will go

out, and so on, till all are dressed; for if it please the Lord to help me to-night, I will make garments to dress you all, before I have done." But this seemed to fasten them on their seats; and truly the Lord was present with us. Some were affected with the word, and I could say verily this was a time of refreshing to my soul, and we had no further disturbance in that place, while I was on the circuit: but we had a most glorious revival of religion in that town. Mr. A. the minister, came among us in the west part of the town and preached, and in a discourse to his own church members, a few days after, he lectured on the third epistle of John. When he came to the words, "Diotrephes loveth to have the pre-eminence, and will not himself receive the brethren," &c. he said, "My brethren, let us not be like Diotrephes. The Methodist brethren have come into this town, let us receive them; the Lord is pouring out his Spirit, and the Methodists are instruments in his hand, of good to precious souls." His people all agreed with him, and we were soon invited among them. Brother Broadhead, and brother Bostwick, preached in his meeting-house, and we were invited freely among the church members; and the work was truly of God; many were converted, about forty joined the Methodists, and some more than that number joined the Presbyterians, and we had no jars, but glorious times. But in the town of Chester it was quite different; though there was a glorious work of God, and near one hundred professed to experience religion. Mr. B., their minister, opposed openly,—he has

since died; and though like Alexander the coppersmith, he did us much evil; yet I hope, he lived to see the evil of his doings, and repent. If so, I would not disturb the living with the dead,—so let him rest in peace.

In the towns of Norwich, West-Hampton, and Montgomery, there was a singular attention to religion. I was the first Methodist preacher that ever went into West-Hampton to preach. The people were warned by their minister, Mr. H——, against the Methodists, insomuch that all his people were prejudiced against us, except a Mr. Soule, who had heard the Methodists somewhere in his travels. This man invited me to preach in his house; and in notifying the people, he did not say it was a Methodist preacher that was to preach. So when some came and learned who was to preach, they were about to go away again; but others said, "it is no harm to hear for once, seeing we are here." This pacified them, and none went away. I preached to them, "What shall it profit a man, if he should gain the whole world and lose his own soul," &c. I left many of them in tears, and rode on to Northampton, to preach that evening. And before I got around the circuit, Mr. S. and his wife met me at Chester, and informed me of the effect of my visit and preaching in West-Hampton. He said, many of the people went home from the meeting, and began to search their Bibles, to see if these things were so; and the result was, they said their Bibles had turned Methodists while they were gone to meeting, and if their

Bibles turned Methodists, they would turn Methodists too. He said his wife did not sleep for three nights, after I was there, and he mentioned another woman that did not sleep for five nights; so great was their concern for their souls. They would not be comforted, until it pleased God to send the blessing of pardoning mercy to their souls. Their evidence was clear, and they rejoiced in the God of their salvation. Mrs. SOULE was exceedingly happy in God. They also informed me that one boy at school heard of the meeting while he was at play in the intermission, and threw down his ball stick, saying, "I will go to meeting." This boy also was converted, and several others; but the singularity was, that their Bibles should turn Methodists. In West-Hampton, Montgomery, and New Norwich, many, I believe, were soundly converted, and the congregations increased. In Montgomery they called a town meeting, and voted their meeting-house to the Methodists one-half of the time, and also that one-half of the money raised for the support of preaching, should be paid to the Methodists. In this town, they had no settled minister, but the prospect was truly glorious, for the work was of God. Many were brought from the power of sin and Satan, to know and rejoice in God their Saviour. In Hampton, Mr. H. preached violently against us, calling us wolves; and for twelve Sabbaths, he had remarked in the most positive manner, in all his discourses, that the Methodists were those that "creep into houses and lead away captive silly women, led away with divers lusts." I had sent

my compliments to him, and desired him to attend my preaching. I hoped to see him, and caution him privately not to expose himself. But though he promised several times to come, he never performed his promise. But preached with greater vehemence against us, declaring positively, in the public congregation, that we were those that "crept into houses and led away captive silly women, led away with divers lusts." Hearing this so repeatedly in all places where I went, as it was not only Mr. H. that preached thus against us, I thought it was time to put a stop to such slanderous abuse. I therefore explained the text Mr. H. so often applied to the Methodists. I observed to the people, that I was exceedingly sorry that Mr. H. whom I had solicited by messengers to attend our meeting, and to expose us if we were wolves; though he had promised to come, yet had never attended with us. I am credibly informed that he has pronounced us wolves, and such as creep into houses after lustful women; I think it my duty to expose such unchristian conduct. As to the text of creeping into houses I considered that this was applicable only to the sect of the Nicholatians, who troubled the church in the days of the Apostles. This sect held to the community of wives; or as the phrase properly signifies, the possession of each other's wives. The Lord said to the Church of Ephesus, Rev. ii. 6, "*Thou hatest the deeds of the Nicholatians which I also hate.*" Their deeds were whoredom, and their principles the same as those that worshipped Baal Peor, the god of Moab, Numbers xxv. 3,

Baal Peor signifies the god of *opening* or *shame*. And for Mr. H. to apply this to the Methodists, equally reflects upon the women of his town, and himself too; for he could not know positively, that the women of his town were lustful, unless he had been guilty. But I believe the women of this town, are as chaste and virtuous as any women I ever met with. And I presume Mr. H. is virtuous, but in his late preaching he has not been modest. I have no other apology to make for him, than his ignorance. He did not know the meaning of the text, nor the proper application of it. And I blush with shame for a man that has received a college education, and has been a minister so many years, not to know the meaning and proper application of that text, which in these days cannot be applied to any sect of Christians; but is only applicable to those who keep brothels. I desired friend S. to tell Mr. H. what I had said. He did so; and soon it became a public talk. And I published it all around, so that it was not long before the text was no more applied to the Methodists.

But the opposition we met with was very unpleasant, for in many places the minister, in preaching violently against us, induced the most influential men to oppose us, and support their minister. Had it not been that we had the Lord, and the force of truth on our side, we should not have prevailed and prospered as we did. But glory be to God, more than three hundred professed to be converted this year, and I know not of one instance where the revival of religion was through the instrumentality of any but the Methodists. Though many joined the Presbyterians and Baptists, they professed to be awakened and converted by attending the Methodist meeting; and there were so many joined them, that it became a proverb, "The Methodists shake the bush, and the Presbyterians and Baptists catch the birds."

In all places where we had a revival of religion, thither they would come, either to oppose or join in union, so as to make proselytes. Many of those who opposed us, were ministers of piety and true godliness. But their notions of Calvinism, and their love for the order and established religion of New-England, had corrupted their judgment; so that they refused liberty of conscience to all but those of the standing order; yet they thought they gave liberty only because they wanted all to be of their opinion; and we all had liberty to worship with *them* and conform to *their* order.

The policy of New-England, was to unite the church with the state, and because they tolerated other denominations, they therefore professed liberty of conscience; but by confounding toleration with liberty, they deceived themselves and others; for toleration is not liberty. Toleration is the counterfeit of liberty, and a bad counterfeit too; for it assumes a right in the ruler to grant liberty to men to worship their God under certain restrictions. This *assumption* is tyranny in disguise. If the rulers could answer for their subjects at the bar of God, and if they would do it faithfully, then they might legis-

late and direct when, and where, and how, and whom we should worship. But seeing that every one of us must give an account of himself to God, it is an insult both to God and man, for man to assume a right to dictate to man, whom or how he shall worship. It is indeed, the duty of civil rulers to regulate civil society, and not suffer one to deprive another of his rights. But to presume to dictate to men whom they shall worship, or how, when, and where they shall worship, is arrogating a power to themselves, that belongs to God only; and this is not only presumptuous, but blasphemous, as it is assuming rights that belong to God alone.

The law establishment of religion in New-England, was a grief and an offence to me. I thought learned men trifled with God and religion, to take upon themselves to coerce the consciences of men, and force them to support a religion they did not believe in. Their establishment was according to the principles laid down by Mr. PALEY, in his Political and Moral Philosophy, page 422, where he labors to show the utility of three things, in an ecclesiastical establishment.

1st. "A clergy, or order of men, secluded from other professions, to attend upon the affairs of religion.

2d. "A legal provision for the maintenance of the clergy.

3d. "And confining of that provision to the teachers of a particular sect of Christians."

He then adds, "if any one of these three things

be wanting, there exists no national religion, or established church, according to the sense which these terms are usually made to convey. He, therefore, who would defend ecclesiastical establishments, must show the separate utility of these three essential parts of their constitution."

Mr. PALEY acknowledges, in page 436, "that a Popish king derives a right from these principles, to employ the power of an absolute monarch, in reducing the people of his empire within the communion of the Popish church."

I thought that common sense would teach any man to understand from this, that if a Popish king derived such a right from these principles, a Protestant king, or rulers, derive the same right from the same principles; and if the principles give the right, and the principles are good, then he is a good king or governor, that acts in conformity to them, and certainly he is a bad ruler that neglects good principles. Therefore those rulers that maintain ecclesiastical establishments on those principles, ought to employ the power of an absolute monarch to reduce the people in their governments into the communion of the religion of the state or nation. The principles are a part of the constitution of the state government. If the principles of establishment be good, they ought to be supported; but if not, they ought to be disannulled; for while the constitutions, or principles, composing the essential ground of a religious establishment are continued, and oaths are administered to magistrates and kings, or governors, to execute the laws according

to the power they derive from those principles, and they neglect to exercise the power of an absolute monarch, to reduce the people into the communion of the church, they are verily perjured men, and trifle with God and religion. And for the learned in New England not to see this, argues that blindness in part had happened to them, and corrupt principles ruled them. O how I longed for learning to teach them the right way. But I said softly to myself, "nothing but pure religion will teach them better," and I am well persuaded, that if the Methodists are faithful to preach and live holiness of heart, that these states will be revolutionized in a few years, and the unscriptural doctrines of unconditional election, and eternal decrees, as they are now preached by Presbyterians and Baptists, will be exploded, and pure religion will revive. I believed the Methodists to be raised up of God for this grand end; and truly God is with us. Though now I am in heaviness at times, and in perils often, by reason of the powers that be in these states, and the artful wiles of learned and designing men, that seem resolved to support error, yet I shall see this pure religion flourish and spread. The Lord hears prayer and blesses my soul, so that I have daily communion with the Father, and with the Son, and with the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER IX.

In my travels and labors on Granville circuit, I experienced many blessings, and in every place, more or less professed to experience religion. In many places the people found their Bibles to be a new book to them, and some said their Bibles had turned Methodists, and they would turn Methodists too, insomuch that prejudice decreased, and love and good will increased. Some conversions were extraordinary. To mention a few: in one place where there were but six members, and the prospects very gloomy; when I first preached there, I desired the few to hold their prayer meetings in as private a manner as they could, and if any were under concern, to invite them to prayer meeting, in as private a manner as possible; I said, "people under conviction, are not willing to have it known publicly.—Therefore if you would gain their confidence, you must manifest your care and good will for them in a private way, and not publish their state of mind. For no man is willing the secrets of his heart should be made known, before he knows the good or bad consequences that may arise to himself from it. Besides it is good policy, in such a land as this, where proselyting stimulates ministers and professors of all denominations, for us

to keep the work of religion as much hid from the public stare as we can. And if it should please God to work among us, it is our duty to be co-workers together with Him. Now, God begins his work in the heart by convicting us of sin, and drawing our minds to seek pardon by secret prayer. We, therefore, should encourage convicted souls to seek pardon in the same way. Indeed many of us found pardon while on our knees in secret prayer: so then let us commend ourselves to every man's conscience, in the sight of God; and when they are converted, they will be willing to own it, and acknowledge God in all his ways."

This counsel took well with the few in this place, and in a short time, about twenty had experienced religion, and about twenty more were under concern; still all seemed to be kept secret. Those who were converted, were taught the propriety of keeping it secret, and it would have been kept so, longer than it was, had not a powerful meeting gave publicity to it. Our preaching day was on Tuesday, and the Sabbath before my turn to preach there, the brethren had a prayer meeting, conducted by the leader, who has since become a local preacher. And so it was, a larger congregation than usual attended; and while the warm feelings of the members, and young converts were manifest in their fervent prayers to God; the answer was visible, in melting effusions of Divine power on the people. Many wept, some trembled; their vessels were full and running over.—One young lad of about thirteen, trembling ran out of the

meeting while one of the brethren was praying. Another young lad, who had been recently converted, saw him go out, and feeling an ardent desire for his salvation, arose from his knees and ran after him. When the fugitive saw himself pursued, he ran faster, and the other calling after him to stop, but he ran with all his might. However his pursuer gained upon him, which when he perceived, he tacked and leapt over a fence. By this time his conviction got fastened on his mind, that when he struck the ground on the other side of the fence, he roared aloud, and fell upon his knees and cried for mercy. The other boy was suddenly by his side all in tears, praying for him; and so it was, the Lord spoke peace to his troubled soul. They then returned to the meeting together praising God. This lad had a brother and two sisters at the meeting, who were all three awakened, and one sister with himself, it was believed, experienced religion. These young women and their brothers, were children of a Baptist Minister, who lived about four miles distant. They went home with tears of grief and joy; and proclaimed aloud, what God had done for them. Elder S—— said, "I will go and see what the Lord is doing among the Methodists." And on Tuesday, I was introduced to Elder S——; I desired him to set next to me, and take part in the meeting. He did so, and I believe he wept for joy this day, at what he heard and saw. Tears flowed from every one. About forty now had experienced religion; and many more this day were convicted. One boy not quite eight years old, went home from

this meeting, deeply convicted. His mother told me afterwards, that she discovered something uncommon was the matter with the child; therefore she watched him, and the next day he was missing. She sought for him some time, at length hearing him sob and sigh at the barn, she drew nigh to the door, and looking through a crack, saw him on his knees, all bathed in tears, and his hands lifted up in prayer. As his back was toward the door where his mother was, he did not see her; directly he groaned out as in great distress of mind, and fell forward prostrate on the floor, and lay sighing. His mother then went in to him, and asked him what he had been doing. He said, "I have been trying to pray." She said, "Well, my child, I want to hear you pray." He then arose up on his knees, all bathed in tears, and said, "O Lord! have mercy upon me, an old sinner. I have lived almost eight years in sin, and have never served thee so well as the dumb creatures around the barn." His mother in relating this to me, was much affected, but said, "When my child said he was an old sinner, and that he had lived almost eight years in sin, I thought what am I, if he views himself an old sinner, I am an older one. If he mourns for his sins, I have cause to mourn for my sins. Alas! I may truly say, I am an old sinner. I have lived thirty-six years in sin, and never served the Lord as well as the dumb creatures around the barn." Thus, out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, it seems the Lord had ordained strength. The father and mother, and two other children of the family, experienced religion. The

next time I came there, though in the winter, they came forward to be baptized, by immersion. I baptized eighteen one cold day, and it seemed as though none were cold. We were all in high spirits. And the best of all was, God was with us.

Another conversion I will mention, that was witnessed on this circuit this year. A young man attended preaching in Suffield; the word reached his heart; he went home late at night, mourning his wretched state by reason of sin. He arrived at his father's house, and found all in bed; he went to his bed-chamber, but his sense of sin and death, forbid sleep. He therefore fell on his knees, for the first time in his life to pray. And his agony of mind increased so much, that he groaned several times.—His mother awoke, and heard him groan, and supposed he was sick, and awoke his father, and he hearing him groan, called out to him, "Richard, what is the matter?" But he made no answer. He called him again, but no answer, except a groan. The father and mother were somewhat frightened. They arose, got a candle, and went into his chamber, and there they saw what they never saw before; their son on his knees, all in tears trying to pray. The father asked him, "What is the matter?" "O father! I am an undone sinner, do pray for me." But the poor old man, never had prayed in his life. The mother tenderly besought her son to compose his mind, and go to bed. But he said, "O mother, do pray for me; I am undone, I shall sink to hell! O, I have sinned against God, the best of Beings; I have sinned, and

am undone. O do pray for me, father—dear mother, pray for me." Thus he went on, and the father and mother both stayed by him all night; and early in the morning, the father went for some praying people, that lived a little way off; and they came in, and spent nearly all the forenoon in prayer for him. About eleven o'clock, the Lord spoke peace to his soul. The change was pleasant and visible, in the tranquil joy he expressed to have in God his Saviour. When the father saw this, with a sedate countenance, and a tear softly stealing from his eyes, he went to his wife and said, (taking her by the hand,) "Our son has given himself to the Lord, and I am resolved to seek the Lord too; will you go with me?" Then for the first time, they began to pray. Thus, the Lord wrought gloriously.

But after all, there were still many led away by the error of the wicked. Deistical opinions, and refined Antinomianism, called Universalism, prevailed; and in some places were popular. These opinions were evidently embraced, I think, only to quiet a troubled conscience without repentance, or a thorough reformation from sinful habits; and to serve also as an opiate to lull the mind into a carnal secure state; and at the same time to stimulate it with confidence, that they might talk against practical godliness and experimental religion, like one whose head is full of strong drink; for so they would talk, and laugh, and crack their jokes, so that a venerable grave mind would only feel disgust and grief, and choose rather to let them have their talk, than make any reply;

fearing that if they should "answer a fool according to his folly," they would be like him.

Though the Calvinists were erroneous in their notions of unconditional election and eternal decrees, yet they believed in repentance and a life of strict morality and piety, as essential to happiness with God in time and eternity. Their creed of justification, adoption, and sanctification, was (with a small exception), well expressed.

1st. "Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins and accepteth us as righteous in his sight," &c.

2d. "Adoption is a work of God's Spirit, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God," &c.

3d. "Sanctification is a work of God's Spirit, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled to die unto sin and live unto righteousness." Then the whole is recapitulated thus:

"What benefits do flow to believers in this life from justification, adoption, and sanctification?"

Answer, 1st. "Assurance of God's love." 2d. "Peace of conscience." 3d. "Joy in the Holy Ghost," &c.

These are benefits that flow to believers in this life. Assurance of God's love: and yet not know that we are converted or born again, is a contradiction, that in time, I think, learned men will be ashamed of. But this doctrine is pure Gospel truth, and

as people become affected and governed by those truths, they will agree in every thing that inspires true Christian fellowship. Our doctrines of justification, assurance, and perfection, are all the same as theirs, only they vary a little in mode of expression.

After I had travelled this year on Granville circuit, I attended the conference in New York, and it was a good conference, much love and good will were manifest in the preachers.

Holiness was still our aim. This doctrine was, in our view, of the highest importance to the Christian world, and the grand mark of our high calling. Perfect repentance, perfect faith, perfect love, were all implied in the grand doctrine of holiness, and every one seemed to pant after it, as the hart panteth for the cooling water brook. To see this among so many preachers, though myself the least, when I went from the conference I was refreshed as with new wine; and as a giant, I felt strong to run my course, to renew the war against the devil and sin.

I received my appointment to travel with brother P. JAYNE, on Long-Island. June, 1832, we took our circuit; and coming from a circuit where I had lively meetings, and from among a people of quite different fashions, it proved somewhat trying at first; but as my commission was to oppose the devil and sin, and preach the necessity of holiness, and know nothing among the people but Jesus Christ, and him crucified, I applied myself to study and much prayer. The Bible was my principal book. I also this year renewed my study of physic, under the direction

of Dr. SCHRIEVES and Dr. WAINRIGHT, of New York. Some knowledge of the human system, and a survey of God's works in creation, gave my soul new springs. I read Mr. WESLEY's Natural Philosophy, CHESELDEN's Anatomy, and several books on Pharmacy. A study of the disorders of the body as well as those of the mind, quickened my soul in the work of the ministry. But I found my ignorance of languages, especially of the Latin and Greek, made my study of the science of physic very hard; yet I so ardently longed for a knowledge of the science, that I improved every moment of spare time in committing to memory those things to which my instructors directed me. After retiring to rest, I made it a practice to study as long as I could well keep awake, and then pray to the Lord to bless all my labor to my good, and help me to remember all I read. Again and again, after an hard day's work of travelling, preaching, meeting class, praying in families, reading about fifty pages, and close thinking, I have lain down to sleep, and sweetly dreamed the subject all over. This I considered as an answer to prayer, for I could say with the poet,

> "Awake or asleep, at home or abroad,
> I was still surrounded with my God."

But though I was ignorant of the learned languages, and but a poor scholar in the English, yet I fancied that I could acquire a sufficient knowledge of the science by reading English authors to enable me to be useful to my fellow creatures, and serve my God

in this world. But travelling about three hundred miles in four weeks, and preaching about once a day or twenty-eight sermons in four weeks, and meeting more than twenty classes, including altogether between four and five hundred members, afforded me but little time for study; yet I could redeem two or three hours each day, besides what I took out of my sleeping hours. O, thought I, what an advantage those have who were educated in the classics, and had stored their minds with a critical knowledge of the sciences before they began their public labors. But then again I thought if they are but drones, they will bring no honey to the hive; besides, the bees generally sting the drones to death in the fall, and so it will be with those who have talents and bury them, they will be stung with remorse when it will be too late to prepare for eternity.

After going around the circuit, and from West to East of the island, and had hired a room to move my family in, I took ship and sailed to Albany, then went to Greenbush, or Bethlehem, where my family had lived for two years, and took them with me to Long-Island. But the parting was a weeping scene, not because we left our house, our hired log house, that leaked in every part of the roof when it rained,—no! but many tears were shed by Dutch and English, and many followed us to Albany and on board the sloop, where a stoic philosopher might have been affected, if he prized friendship above musty books, to see those who two years before were entire strangers, now embrace each other as sisters, most affectionate

and endearing. I never can forget that scene. My dear wife would gladly have suffered another year in her hovel, (for it scarcely deserved the name of house) to enjoy the society of those sisters, many of whom were entire strangers to religion, when she first became acquainted with them, and many were brought to experience religion through her instrumentality. She was to them a nursing mother. But now they must part; and what grieved them most of all, was a fear that they should see us no more. One would have supposed that so many friends would have supplied us with a mint of money. But no! cash, they had but little, and some had none; but of a little they gave us a little, and their hearty prayers. So we parted.

On our passage we met with nothing distressing, except sailing through Tappan Bay, when a squall struck us, and shivered our rigging some, and had nearly overset us; but our good captain foresaw the evil and prevented it. However, it was a thundering noise on deck with the wind and sails for awhile. This was the first time I ever saw the wind take up hogsheads of water, and dividing it into millions of sprays, carry it to a great height, whirling it about in great fury. Our captain said if we had been twenty yards nearer the whirlwind, it would have taken off his mast and all his deck load. But the Lord ruled the storm, and saved us.

On our way up the sound from New York to Cow-Harbor, we had many passengers. Among whom was one Deist, very talkative. He said to the com-

pany on deck, that there was no hell. "No," he said, "I don't believe there is any hell. Though I have read in books, and my father has told me there is a hell, yet I ought not to believe it unless I have seen it. I am not obliged to believe what I never saw, and I never saw hell nor any one that ever did see it, and I don't believe there is any hell." I looked up upon him, and said, "Ah! ha! Do you not believe what you never saw?" He said, "no." "Ah! do you not believe you have got a backbone?" He said, "yes;" "and did you ever see it?" "No." "Then you believe one thing you never saw." "Ah! well," said he, "I have an experience of that, and I mean that I am not required to believe what I never had an experience of, though my father has told me, and I have read in books." "Well, well," I said, "I'll bring you a handful of rats-bane, and tell you it is sweet and good to eat; but you will say, 'no, it is not good, it will poison me to death.' I would say, 'what makes you believe it is poison, and that it would poison you to death? Your father has told you, and you have read in books that it would poison you to death. But you are not obliged to believe it is poison, or that it will poison you to death, unless you have an experience of it. If you have been poisoned to death, then you may believe it is poison, so you'll get to hell and then you'll believe there is a hell.'" I told him he had as good a right to go to hell as any man, but it was not good sense to choose death, when he might choose life. He then began the old rhapsodies of stale invectives against Moses

and the Holy men of old; because they, when commanded of God, warred against cities, and nations, and put to death men, women, and innocent children; and this last he spoke with emphasis—innocent children.

What cruelty, and inhumanity! Would the God of goodness command such a thing? He then said, "No! no!" I said, "God has a right to kill good or bad people, without your leave: he can destroy people by a storm of fire and brimstone from heaven as he did Sodom; or sink an island, or continent with an earthquake; or kill by pestilence or plague, or sword, whoever he pleases, or with a flash of lightning, strike a good man dead. And who are you, that shall reply against God? These things he has done, and these things he is still doing, and he is still good unto all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."

After this I said, "Well, sir, as you say you will not believe any thing you have never seen or had an experience of, do you believe there is a heaven?" He said, "No." "Well, as you don't believe there is a heaven, or a hell, where will you go when you die?" "O, I shall transmigrate, I suppose, into some fine horse." "Ah! ha!" said I, "then it is transmigration you believe in. Well, well, if you get drowned here in the sound, and the horse-feet eat you, you will then turn into a horse-foot, and then the fishermen may catch you, and give you to the hogs, and then you would turn into a hog; and then if some dog should bite you for your mischief, and you

die of the wound, the women might try you up for soap grease, and make you into soap, and that will be the end of you. *** *** *** And do you think God has made human beings to transmigrate into brutes and reptiles, and be liable to be made into soap grease? If you choose to embrace sentiments that will make a brute of you, you are welcome to the honor of it."

Though I answered this fool according to his folly, yet I did it, not to be like him; but lest he should be wise in his own conceit. Much other conversation on the subject of the providence of God, was had while sailing up for six or eight hours. Though he believed there was a God, yet he would not believe man was accountable to God, so as to be liable to praise or blame, or to be rewarded for his good or bad deeds.

But so it was, that the captain of the vessel and some of his neighbors on board, said afterwards, that it was the best discourse they had ever heard; because they could remember so much of it, and they talked so much about it through Cow-Harbor afterward, that it proved a means of stirring up many to seek the Lord, so that about a year after, a large society was formed there; and I was informed that this debate was the first means of the work.

Long-Island affords a different scene, in many respects, from what I had been accustomed to. In the first place, there was a great proportion of drunkards; and the spirit of wickedness was in many respects a different spirit from any I had met with on the main.

Insomuch that the Long-Island devil seemed to be a different devil, from that in other places,—a stupid indifference, either as to religion, or the honors of the world, prevailed generally. They had a pretty good share, however, of the love of money. But too many only wanted money to buy something to get drunk with. It is a pleasant country for farmers, and they generally live well.—But a great part of the people living on the shores, especially the south side, get their living by fishing, and catching clams and oysters, and sending them to market. This is a good employment, but many are apt to drink too much ardent spirits. The people on the island, are by no means an inquisitive people; but quite reserved to strangers. I inquired the way to Hempstead, of an old man who appeared to be sixty-five, and he told me he never was there, that he had never been over one mile east of his farm, and never to New York but once, though he lived about a mile east of Jamaica.

The Quaker customs and fashions prevailed very much; especially to say but little or nothing about religion; and what religion they had was so inward, that it seldom or never showed itself outward. Stillness is a good policy sometimes; but when called to witness for a friend in a good cause, silence is an indignity. But as the poet says of some, so say I of them:

> "Look'd wise, said nothing, an unerring way,
> When people nothing have to say."

But sometimes they could be drawn into some discourse on the subject of religion, and when that was the case, they must talk about the inward work only. I said, "nay, but I want to talk about the outward fruit too, for I can know nothing of an inward work that does not show itself by outward fruit. 'By their fruits we are to know them,' saith our Lord. And did you ever know fruit grow inside of a tree, that we could neither see nor partake of? Have you faith, and love, and joy, and peace? And do you increase and abound more and more in the fruits of the spirit?" They would begin to talk about GEORGE FOX, and BERKELEY, and WILLIAM PENN, and some other celebrated characters of their order. But seldom I could find one that knew any thing about a change of his own heart. I supposed that it was a low time with them in religion; but when I found them so generally ignorant of the new birth, I concluded they were a fallen people, and I said, "they no longer deserved the name of Quaker, for they neither quaked nor trembled at God's word." Indeed, I found them a little ashamed of the name of Quaker, and they showed an itching notion to call themselves Friends, when they did not evince by spirit or conduct any great friendship for any order but their own. They appeared to be great enemies to the ordinances of Christ, to which other denominations were friendly; and other sects of people often showed them civilities by allowing them to hold meeting among them and in their meeting-houses, which they were very willing to improve; but they would not

return the like favors; therefore they were not entitled to the name *Friends* quite so much as other orders were; yet I was willing to treat them all as friends; and I can say, friend Presbyterian, friend Baptist, friend Churchman, friend Lutheran, friend Moravian, friend Methodist, friend Quaker; but I was not willing to call them by that name to designate them from others. As they had once quaked and trembled more than other people, and had been denominated Quakers by their quaking, I must therefore call them by that name now, though they little deserve it.

Their solemn profession that they were led by the Spirit, made me reverence them as a good sort of people, for I thought highly of every one that was led by the Spirit of God. But when I saw their fruits were not the fruits of the Spirit of God, I doubted the correctness of their profession, and often grieved that a people who professed so much of the Spirit, should manifest so little of it.

But Long-Island is peculiar for a people that are still about religion. I thought if they are asleep they must be awaked; and as drunkenness was a prevailing sin, I cried against it with all my might. I soon found the enemy was hit, for many began to flutter and oppose me, so that I had to apply to the civil authority to defend myself from their rage.

When preaching in one of the harbors, in a house on one of the docks at North-Hempstead, one evening some wicked fellows took great offence, because the young women of that place were awakened and

were humbly seeking the Lord, therefore they could not get them to go with them to frolics, and they laid all the blame to me. So they came out in a mob and beset the house. They consulted what to do. As they saw through the window that I stood on the further side of the room preaching, and opposite to me was a candle in a large brass candlestick; so they appointed a stout young man of their party to go in and take that candlestick and throw it at my head, and then rush out. This they said would break up the meeting, and all the people would rush out after him, and if I came out they would catch me in the dark and throw me into the sound. So this young man came in, and took up the candlestick according to their plan. I saw he behaved oddly and strangely; and while preaching I kept my eye upon him. He made some motions as if he would throw the candlestick at me; and just then hearing some voices out of doors, I concluded the devil was in him, and in those out of doors; and while he was looking at me, I broke off preaching abruptly, and said to him, "Young man, the devil is out of doors calling for you. Set down that candlestick, and go out to him." He immediately set down the candlestick and went out. As he was going out, I cried out, "That is a faithful servant of the devil. No sooner is he informed that his master wants him, than he goes immediately." We had no more disturbance that night; for some reason they all departed from around the house. But the next day when I was riding from this place, I fell in with a man that was going on my way. He began

to relate to me a scene he had witnessed the night before in that place. He said, "I live below this, about two miles; and yesterday I heard there was to be a meeting in the harbor at night; so I came up to attend it.—But I was somewhat late, and I found around the door a mob that had assembled; they said, 'they were going to put the preacher into the dock, and had sent in one of their party to throw a large candlestick at the preacher's head, and then rush out.' Some of them called out, 'come out here.' I tried to reason with them, and persuade them not to disturb the meeting. Though I did not know who was preaching, yet I told them I served seven years in the revolutionary war for liberty, and I believed every denomination ought to have liberty to worship God as they pleased; but they swore they would put the preacher off the dock into the sound. Then I felt," said he, "the spirit of seventy-six arising in me, and I took a second thought, that I had better go home, for if I staid there I should certainly fight; and that might be bad for me, as I was a stranger in the place, and none would know but I was of the mob."

When I had heard him through this statement, I asked him if he knew any of the men. He said he knew six of them, and told me their names. I then asked him "if he was willing to go before a magistrate and swear to the truth of this statement. He said, "yes." I then told him that I was the preacher that they intended to put into the sound. He seemed rejoiced that he had met with me, and informed me where Esquire Smith lived; and went

with me there, where he related the whole story.—Esquire Smith took down the names, and desired to defer the receiving the formal complaint, until he should write to them, and if they did not come forward and make satisfaction to me when I came around in four weeks, he would then proceed with them according to law. Accordingly he wrote to them, and one of them came forward and made confession and promised good behavior in future.—But the other five run away, so that none knew where to find them.

Thus the persecution ended; we had no more disturbance at Hempstead-Harbor.

My preaching against drunkenness gave offence to many, for there were more or less drunkards in every place, and some of all ranks, insomuch that some thought intemperance a thing of course. I innocently offended the church members of one church, where their minister had invited me to preach in his pulpit, when I had occasion to speak against the sin of drunkenness, and had stated in my discourse that it was not only a sin, but a great disgrace. I then introduced the plea and defence drunkards generally make to support their sinking character. I remarked that drunkards will say, "don't account us a dishonorable class of community, for we have Captain such an one in our company, and Colonel such an one, and General such an one, and Esquire such an one, and Deacon such an one, and the Rev. Mr. —— such an one." Then I lifted up my hands, and cried, "O Lord God, have mercy on the Church; if the

Reverends have got into the drunken company." I did not know that the minister was in habits of intemperance. But his church members supposed I knew, and therefore they said, I had insulted him by exposing him thus openly. So they were offended. There was nothing said about it to me, until about four weeks after; when I was informed of the high offence I had given to those church members, in what they called insulting their minister. I was very sorry that I could not draw a bow at a venture, but the arrow would hit high dignitaries. And I was also sorry, because I was not to be invited to preach there again. So the dear deluded church members, defended their minister, drunk or sober. They acknowledged he had been the worse for liquor, frequently; and his common dram was a half pint of brandy, and sometimes repeating this, three or four times a day, would produce a little intoxication by night.

It appeared to me that the drunkards of Ephraim were not worse than the drunkards on Long-Island, and like Ephraim, they were like a cake not baked. But though there was a greater proportion of the people drunkards, than in other places where I had travelled, yet there were many, very many, sober and very sensible people. We had revivals of religion in almost every part of the Island; Newtown, Hempstead, Rockaway, Commack, or Huntingdon, and Smithtown, Coram, and Southold, and Riverhead. Some in all these places were awakened, and I trust, soundly converted.

CHAPTER X.

MANY conversions were attended with visible demonstrations of the power of God. Some say, "God is not in the whirlwind, or earthquake; but he is in the still small voice." But I think if any one will read 1 Kings xix. 1—16, they will find it is not said, "God was in the still small voice." But I believe God sometimes speaks in a small low voice. And sometimes in a voice of thunder, that even a Moses would say, "I do exceedingly fear and quake." And God spake to Job out of the whirlwind: so that he has different ways of communicating himself to men. But man!—poor puny man! is not willing to be instructed with any thing, but a still small voice; and that so small, that they cannot be frightened with it. It is a hard matter so to preach, as to suit the taste of all. But God owns the sons of thunder, as well as the sons of consolation. And some are converted by one means, and some by another.

I had some business to settle in Berkshire county, Massachusetts; and late in the fall, I left my circuit, to attend to it. On this journey I had some powerful meetings; and some extraordinary rencounters. At one tavern in Columbia county, while my horse

was baiting, I had an agreeable conversation with a lawyer, on the authenticity of the Scriptures, and the reality of religion. Many other gentlemen were present, and all attentive to our conversation. There came in a young gentleman dressed in ruffles, with a powdered head,—with gloves and silver mounted whip; he strutted around the room, smacked his lips, made some inquiries of the landlord, and showed uneasiness that he could not get the audience of the company. The lawyer and I were in such close conversation, and the other gentlemen took such interest in our conversation that they would not give the young coxcomb an audience. He took offence, and came and stood before me, looking down upon me in a disdainful manner; and when I had done giving the reasons for a certain doctrine the lawyer had asked about, this young dandy gentleman, asked me in a sarcastic tone, "are you not a Methodist preacher?" I looked up upon him, and answered "yes." "I thought you were," he quickly replied with a scowl. I said, "did you ever hear the Methodists preach?" He answered, "yes, I have heard them make a hallooing and bawling, as though they were all crazy." I replied, "I suppose you thought so." "Ah!" said he, "I was not alone in it." "No," said I, "you had the multitude with you." He said, "I suppose *you* would make a hallooing, and bawling, as bad as any of them, if the Spirit come upon you?" I said, "yes, when the Spirit of the Lord God comes upon me, I will make as much hallooing and bawling as you can when the spirit of the devil is upon you;

yes, sir, I will out do you in it ; I will be more faithful for God, than you can be for the devil, and do your best, sir." He looked down, and nestled about a little as though he knew not what to say. But directly turns about, and says, "Which way are you travelling ?" I said, "I am going to New York, sir." "O, you had better go with me, I have a good place for a Methodist preacher." I said, "no, I will not go with you, for you are going to hell." "No," he said, "I am not going to hell." "Well," I said, "you are then going to the gallows, for you look like a gallows-bird." By this time he was fixing his gloves on, and said, "Ah ! I should not have said any thing, but some people are so impertinent, that they will have all the conversation." I turned around and said, "gentlemen, if I have said any thing unbecoming a gentleman, since I have been in the house, I will thank you to tell me, and I will make my acknowledgment." Nearly all spoke at once and said, "not at all, sir ; you have said nothing amiss." Some of them spoke with tears in their eyes. I then turned around and said, "then the impertinence must lie in the ears of this young man." He said, "I did not say that you were impertinent." I replied, "I don't know what your impudence might have led you to say. I perceive, young man, that you are destitute of good manners." He said, "I have good manners too," as he hurried to the door to go out. "Well, if you have, you are keeping them as an old man I heard of, did for his children, he never used any himself." After he was gone, I said to the people, "I

was sorry any young gentlemen would give themselves such airs, as to treat religion with contempt ; it was evident our conversation gave him offence." The lawyer thought it was very likely ; for young gentlemen, he said, "that embrace Deistical principles, think it quite honorable to lampoon religion ; but I think it will be a seasonable admonition to him." I said, "I thought I would answer the fool according to his folly, lest he should be wise in his own conceit : and as Dean SWIFT says, '*Never hew blocks with a razor.*'"

In another tavern, I broke up a company of gamblers playing cards. I threatened the landlord that I would prosecute him, for allowing any to play cards in his house. I threatened the young men too. The landlord said, "he wished that I lived in that place, to break up the practice of gambling, and he knew it was contrary to law to allow it in his house." I called to the young man that was shuffling his cards, to hand them to me,—he did so, and I threw them on the fire, saying, "you may think yourselves well off if I don't enter complaint against you for a breach of the peace." The landlord highly extolled my zeal to suppress immorality. I felt sorry to use violence with any. But the gamblers said nothing about the loss of their cards. I saw they were a little frightened, and the family all came in, and I gave them all an exhortation to repent and seek the Lord. So I left them in their amazement.

On my return to the Island, I found the work of God prospering in different places, but the devil and

his agents made some noise. My grand offence was preaching against drunkenness and Sabbath-breaking.

I found my dress in black gave the people a knowledge that I was a minister. They would therefore be on their guard, and not expose themselves in my presence. So I got me a watch-coat of lion skin cloth, and this served to keep me warm and hide my ministerial dress. As I travelled about, I found I could more easily discover the true characters of strangers than before. Some would venture to swear in my presence, that would not have done so if they had known I was a minister. By this means I had more work to do, as I made it a rule to reprove in a gentle manner, all that swore in my presence.

The oddity of my outside dress, puzzled people to tell what I was. Some thought me to be a Quaker, and some took me for a drover, and others for a plain country farmer. Prejudice against dress, as well as superstitious notions in favor of dress, I think equally argue weakness of mind. I have known some Quakers and some Methodists so attached to a certain fashion of dress, which they call plain, that they would by no means be seen with any other fashioned garment on. This is what some Presbyterians in New-England call superstition.—And I have known many in New-England, who used curling of hair before they obtained a hope, as they call it, for they rarely call it being converted ; but after they obtained a hope, they took more pains to curl and dress themselves gaily than they did before, for fear they

should be superstitious. So Quakers and Methodists are afraid of the fashions of the world, as they called it, lest they should sin by being proud. And Presbyterians and Church people sometimes indulge the more in gay fashions for fear they should sin by being superstitious. Thus they are all zealous to shun sin. But I think if we contrast the cost with the convenience, and wear such clothing as best comports with our purse, in quality and fashion, and at the same time serves to keep us warm or cool, as occasion requires, without gaudy or wanton show; but as the Apostle saith, with modest apparel, I say, " I think it is our greatest wisdom and happiness." And as to religion in dress, one fashion may possess as much as another. However, some think they are better with a plain dress on, and some think they shun superstition by dressing gaily ; while they are as superstitious in a gay dress, as the other is in a plain dress, and both are equally proud of their dress ; and possibly both owe the tailor for making it, and have no money to give to a starving family. O the grovelling idea that makes us look for true greatness in outward dress and show. When I see a young minister intent upon dress and flowery speech, I fear it is the praise of man he seeks, and not the good of souls. Does he think a ministerial dress will make a minister of him? And does high sounding words, pronounced in the newest style, serve for matter ? O ! no ! he is but a tinkling cymbal, who thinks so. My mind was often led to view what I feared would be a fatal mistake in some, who sought for

popularity. To appear learned, they were particular to pronounce in the newest fashion.

But I labor under great difficulties for want of an education. I am obliged to go to my Lexicon to find out the signification of words and their etymology. I found that some who would be ingenious disputants, were fond of coining words. In these days the word *fontal* was introduced to prove that God and man were both the cause of sin. One minister told me that God was the efficient cause, and man was the *fontal* cause. This new word *fontal*, I did not understand. Well, like an honest man, I asked him what it meant, and what it was derived from? He said, "it was derived from font, or fountain." "O, I begin to understand it," said I, "well, what next? how is man the fontal cause of sin?" "Why," he said, "to explain it by a similitude. I make an axe helve, I am the efficient cause of the axe helve, and the tree is the fontal cause, because it partakes of the nature of the axe helve." "O," said I, "I think I understand you; God made man upright like a tree for axe helves; so man was made to be worked up into sin, as the tree into axe helves. But as the tree cannot make axe helves of itself, so neither can man make sin, therefore God is the agent to make sin, as you were the agent in making the axe helves. But, sir, how is it that *man* is accountable for sin, and the tree is not accountable for the axe helve, for neither were any thing more than the *fontal* cause. But who is to be praised for a good axe helve, and who is to be blamed for a bad one, but yourself, sir?

And as *man* is not sin any more than the tree is an axe helve, would you intimate that God, by Almighty agency, makes good and bad sins out of man as you make good or bad axe helves out of a tree?" To these objections he made no other reply than that I did not take his meaning, that it was a great mystery, and if I was learned I should believe as he did. "But we can't all see alike," said he. So our discourse ended. My capacities and learning were too small to understand the deep mysteries of *fontal*, *O tempora! O mores!* New words, and new modes and forms, and new ways of pronouncing, have been increasing since the days of Nimrod and the building of Babel, and they may still increase till all shall know the Lord from the greatest to the least.

But it was not religious people only, that invented new words,—physicians also invented some peculiar to themselves. I heard of a case that was said to happen on the Island, and though I cannot give the name of the physician, yet it is so much like some that I am acquainted with, that I think there is no harm in believing the report. It was said that an aged woman had been long sick, and many doctors had done their best to cure her, but all had failed. There was yet one doctor, whose fame was great among some people; but alas, he was called a quack by the faculty. However, the patient's friends must have him called in, so he came; and after feeling the pulse awhile, the sick woman said, "well, doctor, do you know my case." "O yes *mem*, it is a plain case." "Well, doctor, what is it?" "Why *mem*,

it is a *scrutanutory case*." "*Scrutanutory case*, doctor, pray what is that?" "It's a dropping of the nerves, *mem*." "Dropping of the nerves, doctor; why, what's that?" "Why, *mem*, the *num-naticals* drop down into the *pizer rinctum*, and the head goes *tizer-rizer, tizer-rizer*." "Ah, doctor, you have hit my case, it is just so with me." This to her was undoubtedly a learned description of her case, and he applied his remedies with such success that she recovered. But this word making, was the height of learning, in the opinion of some.

I knew of a minister, that took a notion that the word *selah*, was used in the Psalms to grace the diction of psalmody. And he thought to improve his own style in extempore preaching, by every now and then singing out *selah*. But this oddity served to stir me up to inquire into the meaning and use of this said word *selah*, and to my surprise, I found upon inquiry, that the learned differed in opinion about the signification and use of this same word *selah*. Well, thought I, my Baptist brother may be right for all. But at last, I learned from Commentaries and Brown's Dictionary of the Bible, that my own mind could be best satisfied in believing the word *selah* to be a note in Hebrew music, that directed them when chanting the psalms, sometimes to repeat the sentence again, and sometimes to raise or lower the voice; but whether I am right or not, I cannot be positive. I improve it for that purpose, and I think it a profitable word, for I often pause and consider the sentence again, and read it over with greater emphasis, and my mind is more solemnly impressed with the subject. So I think *selah* does me some good.

But I was told that words were arbitrary things, and signified just what men of science chose to have them. This to me, was paradoxical. But I am not a man of science, therefore I will not quarrel about words.

My family lived in Smithtown, at widow R. Wheeler's. She, and her son and daughter, were exceedingly kind. Others in that place were also kind. We had four children; and they were sick of the remittent fever, or ague and fever, for seven months, during the time we stayed there. And my wife was sick with the same disorder five months. I escaped an attack of this disease until the month of May. But I took cold the day before I started for our last quarterly meeting, to be held at Newtown, and was sick on the way. My wife and children had recovered of their long attack of the ague and fever, and she accompanied me to this quarterly meeting. It was well for me that she could drive the horse, while I shook with the ague. I lay sick at Newtown three weeks, and could not attend conference, which commenced that week. However, I was elected elder at this conference, though I was not there to be ordained, and received my station to travel Dutchess circuit. So after I was sufficiently recovered to ride home, I prepared to leave the Island. But first I must go on to Dutchess circuit and prepare the parsonage-house at Rhinebeck, to live in. I left the

Island about the last of June, to go around a six-weeks circuit, and then return to my family ; and though I had a good horse and an easy chair to ride in, I found myself so weak, that thirty miles in a day would tire me down. I found my colleague, the Rev. DAVID BROWN, in Amenia; as good a man as ever came from Ireland. I found him to be a father and a friend ; he had charge of the circuit. A young man on trial, made the third preacher, so we were ready to commence operations.

When Bishop ASBURY returned from the New-England conference he stopped at brother GARRETTSON'S, in Rhinebeck, and sent for me to ordain me an elder. I had then but recently arrived on the circuit. I was ordained in the Methodist Church at Rhinebeck, on the 21st of July, 1802. Bishop ASBURY preached on the occasion, from 2 Cor. iv. 7 ; "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." This was a great sermon to me. The excellency of the power is of God—in creation, in redemption, and in the agency of the Holy Spirit. After I was ordained, I rode to Redhook to preach that evening, and then back to father GARRETTSON'S to accompany Bishop ASBURY the next day, as far as Peekskill. It was late at night when I returned, and we started at five o'clock next morning to ride fifty miles.

When we arrived at Governor Courtlandt's in Peekskill, near sun-down, I was tired out ; but Bishop ASBURY appeared to be in high spirits, instructing the family, explaining scripture. But I begged that we might have family prayers, that I might go to bed. Bishop ASBURY prayed with great freedom ; he was much in the spirit. Next morning, he informed me before we parted, that he had not money enough with him, to pay his ferriage across the Croton river, and I had but about twenty shillings with me. But I said, "I will divide with you. I want two and six-pence, to carry me back to Rhinebeck, and you take the rest." He said, "No, I only want enough to carry me to New York." I urged him to take all but two and six-pence, for he had no means of obtaining money there, unless he begged it ; and begging for one's self is a poor business, unless it is of well tried friends; so he took it, and I thought myself well paid in being in his company so long, and receiving so many lessons of instruction and good counsel from so great a Christian as he was. So we parted in the morning, and I returned to Rhinebeck in two days. This was before I went for my family. But my exercise soon brought on a relapse of my ague and fever, which laid me up for some time, so that I was gone longer from my family than I had intended. When I had sufficiently recovered I returned to Smithtown ; but I was taken sick again on the day I landed at Smithtown Harbour, and found, to my grief, that my wife and children had been sick also, nearly all the time I was gone. However, in about three weeks, my wife began to recover slowly ; but I grew worse, and two of the children were so very sick, that it was past the middle of

October, before we could move, and then we were not fit to move. But at last I begged the kind brethren in that place, to put us on board a vessel, that sailed to New York, and they did so. At New York, I got my goods put on board a vessel that sailed to Rhinebeck, where they landed us in the night. The next day we got teams to carry us to the flats. We found the parsonage-house not sufficiently clean to put up our things, and my wife was still weak, hardly able able to set up all day. Some young women came to clean house, and I hired a woman to wash. When I had paid off all the expenses, I found I had but six-pence left. This was a trying time to us; myself sick, my wife and children still poorly, but mending. My acquaintances in this place were all gone from home at this time, and were not expected to return under two or three weeks. I had sent my last remaining six-pence to buy some medicine, and next morning after this, my wife said we had only about enough provision for three meals. I was surprised to hear it, and sat down in the corner to consider what I could do. I had said, I cannot eat any this morning. I desired her to eat and give the children some. I thought for me to go to strangers to ask for credit, would be a disgrace to the Methodist Church; and to carry my clothes, or household furniture, to pawn or sell, would expose my impoverished state, and be equally disgraceful to the Church I served. And to beg of strangers, with whom I had just come to live, would sink the dignity of a minister, that ought to put his trust in that God that fed the prophet

Elijah by ravens, that brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening. My soul was oppressed with grief. I wept, and said in my heart to God, "in thee will I put my trust. If I starve and die, I will not do any thing that would disgrace thy cause, or the Church I serve." I was immediately blessed with a peace of soul, and such resignation, that to die or live, was equal to me. About three hours after, Brother SUCKLEY from New York, came in to see us. We were glad to see him, but said nothing to him of our poverty. When he left us, he gave me a five dollar bill. I was thankful for this, and thought truly, it is good to trust in the Lord. Though I had resolved to eat nothing of the small allowance my wife spoke of, unless I could find some way to get more, so that if we must starve, I would starve first. But now we had a rich supply; the five dollars would make us comfortable, until my friends came home, to whom I could make known my distresses, without disgracing the Church. Father GARRETTSON, and Esquire SANDS, were rich in this world's goods, and rich in grace. When they returned home, they called to see me, and supplied all our wants, as to food and raiment. They refreshed us in body and mind. Esquire TILLETSON, and Mr. SCHUYLER, were also peculiarly kind. I could soon say with the Apostle, I know how to suffer need, and I know how to abound. Often I have expressed my thanks to God, for grace in that trying hour, whereby I was enabled to trust in him. O! the good of religion in time of trouble. I could chant the forty-six

Psalm: "God is our refuge, a very present help in time of trouble."

I must say, all the people in Rhinebeck were kind to me and my family. Brothers GARRETTSON and SANDS, with the little help from the society in this place, had built a meeting-house in very plain form. Some laughed about it. One young man, T. LEE, called it the Lord's *barn*. And the first time I preached in it, the Lord sent home the word to his heart. and he and thirteen more were soon after converted, So what he had called the Lord's *barn*, became nothing less than God's house to him. After this he became a preacher, and travelled a number of years, and then located.

CHAPTER XI.

This year was a season of affliction. My ague and fever, would return upon me so frequently, that I was not really well at any time. I could attend some of the appointments, but disappointed others. This was a grief to me; but I was not able to attend. My fits of ague and fever, grew worse, so that I was weakened down to that degree, that I could not get from by bed to the fire, without help. When my fits came on, I became light-headed, and lost my sense of objects about me. Then, (as they told me,) I would begin to preach, or pray, or sing, and continue it until I began to sweat. At these times, the neighbors would come in to hear me. Brother Fox, a local preacher, who boarded with us, informed me afterwards, of one sermon I preached in my delirium that deeply affected his mind. He retained the order and method of treating the subject, and preached on the same text afterward, several times in different places, with great freedom. Some said I preached better in my delirium, than when I had my senses. But that I was happy in God, amidst all my affliction is what I can well remember. I was willing to die

or live. I had no choice of my own. My whole cry was,

"Give joy or grief, give ease or pain,
Take life or friends away;
But let me find them all again
In that eternal day."

"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." I was given over to die by many, but I said I shall not die. I was positive, not only because I had a revelation when I was twelve years old, that I should live until I should be thirty-six, but I had also a manifestation in one of my fits, that I should not die. One day, feeling much distressed, I said to my wife, "I feel strangely, I don't know but what I am going to die! but don't be frightened, I am happy!" This was all I remember of saying; but I though I was dead, and my soul had left the body, and appeared transparent in the perfect shape of my body, standing before me. So "whether I was in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell." However, I spoke to my soul, while my body still felt pain, and asked, "where he was going?" as it appeared about to leave me. My soul replied, "I am going to heaven." I said, "answer me one thing before you go. Must my body lie in such pain as this until the resurrection?" Just then I heard something behind me as I lay upon my left side. I turned over to see what danger was there, and to my joy, I beheld my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! He had heard my enquiry,

and answered it, by saying, "No! your soul has not yet left the earth, that is the reason you still have pain; when your soul leaves the earth, then your body and senses will be at rest; but your soul must not go yet, you have more to do." I thought he spoke to my soul to return into my body, and I turned to look at it again, that I might see it, and know more about my spiritual part than I had done. But it was not to be seen. I turned back to see the Lord and he had disappeared. I grieved that I had lost sight of so glorious a personage. When I came to myself, I found my wife standing by my bed. She told me she thought I had been dead, but had sent Bro. Fox for two doctors, and neither were at home; she then sent for some camphor, and the first sense I had of returning animation, was on feeling some camphor running down my throat through my nostrils,—my wife in her fright, emptying some part of her phial of camphor into my nose. But I retained the sense I had of my Lord and Saviour, and I am able to say, that the description St. John gave in Revelation, first chapter, was a good one, but falls vastly short of a full description. It appeared to me that his raiment which shone so bright, and himself, were all the same. I could see at one glance, every part, both before and behind. He appeared all the same.—His garments appeared to be the refulgence of the Divine nature, shining forth like the color of a bright blaze of fire. I know of nothing that I can compare him to, that will give any just idea of his substance.

I am always happy in meditating on that Divine refulgence of which I had a view, at this time, for I know it was Christ my Lord. "Well," I said, "for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

From this time my fits were lighter. But I could not eat any thing, except to sip a little thin milk porridge; and after awhile coffee was my only diet. My wife was uneasy, she feared I would starve. Sister GARRETTSON, interested herself very much in my case. She is not only a good and pious woman, but a person of excellent understanding, and extensive information. Well, the dear good soul came to see me, and to persuade me to eat a little panada. I objected, and assigned my reasons: I said, if I take any thing on my stomach but coffee, it will produce nausea, and bring on ague. She thought not; and expressed her fears that I could not live, if I did not take something more than coffee. My wife joined with her. I still objected—they plead hard. At last my wife sighed and turned away discouraged. Sister GARRETTSON wept. When I saw the tears running down her face, while she said, I think you had better eat a little, I yielded to their entreaty, and took a few spoonfuls. In about fifteen or twenty minutes I began to puke, and my ague came on worse than ever. When they saw this, they expressed their sorrow that they had persuaded me. After this fit, which lasted about twenty hours, before the sweating subsided, I was very weak, not able to get in or out of bed without help. And after this, neither coffee, nor milk-porridge, would any longer

sit on my stomach. Nothing now but tea would suit me. But in a few days, I could take a little dried beef with my tea; and in three or four weeks, I could take toasted bread and cheese with tea, and walk across my room. I recovered but slowly, yet I was able to attend the conference in Ashgrove, in June, 1803. But my feeble state of body, being sick the most of the year, did not prevent me from preaching sometimes. At conference, my brethren thought it best for me to take a supernumerary relation that year. I consented, as it was doubtful whether I could preach much for some time. Our conference was attended with the blessing of God, as usual; and on Saturday, arrangements were made for preaching on the Sabbath. Bishop Asbury was to commence in the morning, and preach the first sermon, brother GARRETTSON to preach immediately after him; and brother THACHER, and brother MORIARTY, to follow him, so as to have four sermons for the congregation that attended at the church.

The next day the assembly was so great, that it was appointed for the preachers to stand in the door of the *house*, and give up the seats in the *house* to the women, and the men were to stand out of doors. But the congregation was so large that they could not all hear. I with other preachers, were on the outside of the congregation, and saw numbers turn away that we knew could not hear, so as to understand. We felt grieved to see them gathering in little companies, talking of the news and politics of the day. Some preachers proposed to me to go into a

wagon, under the shade of some trees, a little way off, and begin to sing; and those in groups would gather round, and we could exhort them without disturbing the assembly at the meeting house. My heart was warm with love. I went on. They followed. We began to sing. The people gathered around, and many of the brethren that could not hear at the church, came also. We had, I suppose, near five hundred hearers. I prayed, and gave out for my text, "*God is love.*" When I came to my application, the word was attended with power; and the wind blowing gently to carry my voice to the people at the church, they heard, and came flocking to our shade, around the wagon. I thought their meeting was out, and feeling the Spirit of the Lord God upon me, I gave full vent to my feelings; and directly those who were in the church, came rushing out to see what was going on at the wagon. Some jumped out of the windows, and the rushing was so great at the door, that brother GARRETTSON gave over preaching before he had half done. Preachers and people flocked around the wagon. By this time I was nearly exhausted, and gave place for brother THACHER and MORIARTY. I went to a house near by, and lay down to rest me, and after taking a little refreshment, I walked out to get some good of the meeting. The congregation was very large, more than could well hear the preaching at the wagon; and hearing some in the Church, I went in to see what they were about. I found they were holding a prayer-meeting, and there were a few preachers with

them, sitting in the altar, and the seats in the house nearly half filled with people. So I attended one or two prayers with them, and then I began to sing, and before we had sung the hymn through, the people crowded the church full. I though t I must exhort them once, and to enforce the necessity of religion, I endeavored to illustrate the awful state of the damned. I spoke of the lake of fire, and the wrath of God, like a furious storm of vengeance, raising the lake in surging waves with tremendous roar. "The rich man," I said, "was now there. O, the shrieks and cries while vengeance beats down a heavy storm that sinks them low in the dashing waves! See! see!! see the rich man raising his head above the surging billows! Hark! hark! how he cries, 'water! water! water! to cool my tormented tongue!!'—O, poor sinners, would you go to hell? Pray, my dear brethren, O pray for them, see how they run, (for they began to run out of the house.) O, my God, have mercy on them." By this time my voice was lost in the out-cry. Those in the gallery took fright and ran down stairs so fast, that many fell at the foot of the stairs, and they lay in quite a heap; some ran over them, some fell out of doors. The preachers from without met them at the door and formed a circle for prayer, and nine professed to be converted in that praying circle. This prayer-meeting closed the labors of the day. Next morning I heard that complaint was made to the Bishop against me for disturbing the order of the meeting. So he called me up in the conference, and said there had been a com-

plaint against me, and some others for disturbing the order of the meeting, the day before. The other preachers spoke first to excuse themselves, they said, "they did not do any thing but attend to my meeting in the wagon," that their reason for attending was, "that they believed many could not hear at the Church," &c.

I smiled to think they were giving me all the credit as instrumental of the good meeting. But Bishop ASBURY said, "well, brother HIBBARD, what have you to say? it seems you are the only one responsible." I said, "why, sir, I did not know that I interrupted the meeting, until this morning, when brother BAKER told me he had complained of me. But, sir, I can say this, I am sorry to interrupt the order of any meeting. It is contrary to my principles, to interrupt any meeting for worship; but I cannot say I am sorry for what has been done, seeing I had no design to interrupt, and we had so good a time of it." "Ah! well," said he, "you have said enough—you have said enough—it was a good time." So I sat down—some smiled, and made their remarks about my loud voice. Bishop ASBURY said I was heard distinctly half a mile. I thought surely the zeal of the Lord must have eaten me up, for I was not aware of speaking so loud. Some said, that when I spoke of the rich man in hell, I stretched up my arms, and being emaciated, my fingers were long and slender, my eyes hollow and ghastly, so that when I opened them, looking up to imitate the rich man in hell, those in the gallery were frightened. They acknowledged it

was an awful time, and no laughing matter, but they said, "if I had been pictured out as I looked then, they presumed I would be frightened at my own picture." Our conference closed, and I was appointed supernumerary, that is to say, one over and above what was wanting on the circuit, and yet I could be occasionally employed, as my health would allow. Brother COLEMAN, and brother LOWERY, were to travel on the circuit, and I must fill vacant places. Our temporal concerns had been the year before very short of a supply of our wants, so that I had been deficient with my brethren, from year to year; and my mind was not at rest about it. I felt grieved to see my colleagues destitute, though every plan to raise the collections so as to meet the demands, had been in vain. I saw two evils, one in the preachers, and one in the members; to remedy them, appeared to be impossible. However, to shun the evil myself, I refused to take any quarterage until my colleagues were paid off; of course I had not a sufficiency to pay all my expenses for my family the first quarter, but I chose to trust in the Lord. Therefore, I begged of my brethren not to urge me to take the share that would fall to me by the customary division, though I had been brought to only three meals, and my family and myself, had been sick. In this trying hour, I chose to say nothing about my own poverty, except to individuals that I could trust as confidential friends, and give no account of my presents in future, nor make any demand for quarterage, unless there was a surplus, after paying the customary quarterage

of the preachers, and the presiding elder's dividend, &c. Therefore, I made no claim for deficiency at conference. It was a rule of discipline in those days, to give account of all presents received, or we could not claim any salary from the public collection. In those days, a preacher's salary was only eighty dollars a year and his travelling expenses, and his wife's eighty dollars, and each child under the age of seven years, sixteen dollars; and over the age of seven and under the age of fourteen, twenty-four dollars a year. This was thought by all to be a sum too small for the decent support of a family, though the house rent should be paid for him. However, this small sum was not raised by quarterly contributions; and as our presiding elder, brother GARRETTSON, received nothing for expenses or salary, which made it lighter for the circuits to make out the collections, yet they fell short nearly one-half, and some circuits more than half. It was not because they were not able to raise the money, but it was because they would not contribute liberally enough; yet some few were in reality liberal enough, and all were liberal in speech. I found the Methodists were made up of two sorts of people. One, those that act from principle, and the other, such as act from feeling, or sympathy. Those that acted from principle, contributed liberally; but those that acted from sympathy, were liberal only at times, when their hearts were affected; and it took so many different things to affect them all, and affect them to the purpose, that my gifts were not adequate to the task; therefore, to remedy all the evils seemed to be impossible. I thought, however, if I can escape the evil for one, it will be well for me, for though I get less money, I am sure of an approving conscience.

This rule subjected the preachers to many difficulties: First, it was a trouble and an affliction to render an accurate account of all the presents they might receive. Sometimes presents were given to my wife, with a design that I should not render an account of them, and this I conceived as an evasion of the rule of discipline which I thought was not right. If I had cloth for a coat, or linen for shirts, it was given to my wife. If I had tea, or sugar, or the neighbors sent me a load of wood, or a few bushels of grain or potatoes, they were all sent to my wife, or I must give an account of them, before I could have a claim on the stewards for money raised by public collection towards my salary. This mode of giving, evaded the rule of discipline, and I thought it was not altogether right, though I did not like the rule at all; but I would show respect to it as long as it was a rule. The rule was designed to make all equal, therefore our design was good; but there was no justice in it, because one preacher might have need of more than another: there was no provision for the expense of sickness in his family, and this rule shut out all provision. If I opposed it, I must refuse to give an account of my presents, and thereby have no claim on the public contributions. Secondly, another difficulty which arose out of this rule was, I was considered a good hand to beg,

though by the by, I am a poor beggar. I make out but poorly at that business. However, as this opinion had gone forth concerning me, I could not alter the opinion and do my duty, for I must teach the brethren their duty to contribute liberally, for God loveth the cheerful giver, and I always thought a stingy soul was a poor, mean, insignificant creature, whom God hateth. Dr. WATTS describes this miserable character in one of his lyric poems thus:

"Let a broad stream of golden sands,
Through all his meadows roll,
He's but a *wretch* with all his lands,
That wears a narrow soul.

"Were I so tall to reach the pole,
Or grasp the ocean with my span,
I must be measured by my soul,
The mind's the standard of the man."

Well, I must teach my brethren the duty of giving. I must say with Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 11, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" I ought to say with him also, "But I have used none of these things, neither have I written these things that it should be so done unto me; for it were better for me to die than that any man should make my glorying void. For though I preach the Gospel I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel. For if I do this thing willingly I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the Gospel is committed unto me. What is my reward then? Verily, that

when I preach the Gospel I may make the Gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the Gospel. For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more," &c.

This doctrine, I fear, is little understood, and it seems it was not generally practised even by the Apostles; therefore Paul, in writing to the Phillippians, gave this reason for sending Timothy to them, Phil. ii. 20, "For I have no man," said he, "like-minded, who will naturally care for your state; for all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him, that as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the Gospel." I think I had a clear sense of this doctrine. I could not agree with the Quakers who condemned all ministers as hirelings that took a salary for preaching. No! for though the beloved Apostle, whom I wish to imitate, would not have his glorying made void, by making the Gospel chargeable; yet he allows it strictly lawful, to take money for preaching the Gospel, though under certain circumstances it was not expedient; and going among the Gentiles, who had no law like the Jews to support Bible religion, (neither did the Jews improve the law they had for the support of the Gospel of Christ;) therefore he made contributions to relieve the poor saints, who were cast out of the synagogue for professing Christ, and to support those that ministered in spiritual things: hence we read of *general* and *particular* contributions, &c. This method of sup-

porting the Gospel, appeared to me to be the more excellent way. Taxation has been thought by some to be good, and if there were precept or example for it in the New-Testament, I might think so too. But for contributions we have both precept and example, and still there is danger of abusing our power in the Gospel. O what fear the Apostle expres ses, in the text, " *That I abuse not my power in the Gospel.*" I examined for myself how I might use my liberty and not abuse it. Now, thought I, as it is the design to equalize the labor and the support to the preachers in the Methodist connexion, how can I do my duty without giving an account of all my presents, and some may think I receive more than I give an account for, though none had intimated such a thing of me, but they had of others, in my hearing, and some unpleasant things had arisen between different preachers. One preacher was expelled for lying about his presents. It was proved that he received more than he gave account of ; and I thought it would grieve me, if any one suspected my honesty, and they were as likely to suspect me as others, for they think me a great beggar. Again I thought, if I divide equally with my colleague, and we are both deficient, and he should be a man that had no gift at begging, and if I should receive one hundred dollars in presents, and those brethren that gave me presents should give less (which is the case with some) into the public collection ; so that the collection would be one hundred dollars less than it would have been if they had not made these presents to me, or my wife, he might be

deprived of *fifty dollars*, and might suffer. But how could I answer it to God ? If none else knew, God would know it, and to him I must give account ; therefore I resolved not to be guilty of this evil ; although it was the same year in which I was afflicted with the ague and fever, and my wife and children had been long sick, and I had been reduced to only three meals for my family, and not a cent to help myself with ; yet it was by grace I resolved not to take any quarterage until my colleagues were paid off, though I was sure I should get but little. When I had charge of a circuit, I could then literally perform what is required of me, viz., to see that my colleague " behave well and *want nothing*." I could allow him his quarterage if there was enough contributed, and it would be a strange thing if I travelled a circuit and got no supply. Besides, I wished to put a stop to so much complaining as there had been ; at least none would have cause to complain but myself, if I were the only one deficient.

It has often grieved me, to hear such sort of begging, and complaining as savors of a distrust in the Lord, or is only calculated to excite sympathy. I despise such methods of begging. If people will not give from principle of duty to support the Gospel ministry, they never will enjoy true happiness in the cause of religion. Those that give only when their feelings are excited, are happy by fits and starts.— Their peace is not like a river, that runs smoothly by night and day. And if God works among such a people, they don't enjoy it as they might ; they are

too zealous to hold out long. If they give when warm affections move, they give liberally,—yes, so liberally, that on mature reflection, they are sorry they gave so much; and when called upon again, they give nothing, and being ashamed to be seen in the congregation, and not give something, prompts some to stay at home on collection days: and yet such persons would spend twice the sum, to treat an old acquaintance they were pleased with. I saw so much of this in my travels, and I had such a sense of the evil attending this generous sympathy, that I strove to shun those methods of raising collections.

However, I resolved to take no money out of the collections, until my colleagues, and the presiding elder, were paid their expenses and quarterage; reckoning for themselves and wives, only. Children were in those days left out of the claim, by a vote of the annual conference, though the discipline specified an allowance with these commanding words as, each child under the age of seven years, *shall be allowed* sixteen dollars, &c. This *shall be allowed*, however, was not regarded by the annual conference. Their vote said, they shall not be allowed any thing, unless there is more than enough to pay all deficiencies of the preachers and their wives. So I did not allow claims for children, unless there was more than enough in the collection, to answer the demand for the preachers and their wives. Now when I had resolved to do this, I could teach the brethren their duty in contributing, and I could beg for my colleagues, and myself too, without any shame or fear of offending. Thus I took a middle course in the manner of begging. I warned every one of his duty, saint and sinner, Methodist or not Methodist. I say it is the duty of every one to give, according as God hath prospered him.

I can beg for the Lord's sake, and for my brethren, that labor night and day to save souls; yes, I can beg for them and myself too; and I am not ashamed of it, because it is not to aggrandize myself or my brethren, but to supply necessities, and to enable us to do good to all.

Having the year before taken the above resolution, I was this year ready to pay off the preachers, as they were both single men. It took forty dollars a quarter to pay their salaries; this left me twenty or thirty dollars a quarter, and my wife opened a school in one part of our house, and had about thirty scholars, which brought about fifty dollars a quarter. Our kind friends at Rhinebeck, came in to see us one day, and brother Garrettson said, that what my wife earned, over and above her labor, to take care of the children, must not be appropriated to the support of the family. I said, I did not know how we could live without it. He said, "we must supply your wants." I found they had consulted on the subject, and they were all of the same mind. O my soul be grateful, thought I. So by their direction the earnings of my wife was laid aside for a time of need. And while we were at Rhinebeck three years, she earned by hard labor, more than three hundred dollars. After she had taught school six months, her health became so im-

paired that she gave up her school; but when she recovered, she commenced weaving, and our children, though all boys, helped her. She made them spool, and wind her quills, and do much of her house work, so that she could earn more than half a dollar a day. She saved more than two hundred dollars of her earnings, and could have saved more, but we thought it not best to burden our friends too much.

Brother LOWERY travelled the circuit a little more than three months, when he was called away by Bishop COKE, to accompany him to England.—He had been a missionary from the English Methodist conference to one of the British provinces, and had come to New-York, to get a passage to England. And he tarried among us, until called away. He was a good preacher, and highly esteemed on the circuit. But his stay with us was short, so that we had but little acquaintance.

After brother LOWERY left us, my health being much better, I took the circuit, and with brother COLEMAN, labored to bring the dear people to the Lord. We could say with the Apostle, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ stead, be ye reconciled to God." I travelled this circuit the next year also, and had brother D. ENSIGN for my colleague; so that I was three years on this circuit. We had no great revival of religion until the last year, though in the two first years there were about one hundred converted, and several pro-

fessed sanctification. Sister SCHUYLER at Rhinebeck, experienced sanctification in a class-meeting at my house. This was one of the most awfully solemn seasons I ever had. When I had done speaking to the class, I asked sister SCHUYLER to close our meeting by prayer; and she was led by the Spirit, to pray for sanctification. Her gift in prayer, at all times, surpassed all I ever heard, of man or woman; and at this time she excelled herself, and every thing I had ever heard. Her converse with God,—her thanksgiving for justification through the redemption that is in Jesus, and the faith that is by him;—her confession of weakness of faith, and depravity of our nature, that rendered us so liable to err from the paths of holiness, were expressed most feelingly. She portrayed the advantage of sanctification to assist us to serve the Lord perfectly: and then in her appeal to the Lord for the sincerity of her motives and the fullness of his grace for all she asked for, she seemed to us to be conversing in the language of immortals. She implored the Most High to implant the blessing in her soul for the sake of Jesus Christ, who hath redeemed us to himself, that we should be a peculiar people, zealous of good works. She then cried out, "O thou dost hear! thou art nigh! O thy glory! O!!" and sunk forward in her chair with a sigh. For about four minutes we were all overwhelmed with divine glory, and nothing was uttered by any one, but a sigh or a groan that indicated the joyful surprise of the Divine presence.—

After the lapse of about four minutes, she arose from her chair, before which she had continued kneeling, and her expressions of thanksgiving to God, exceeded all she had ever expressed before. She appeared to be refreshed as with new wine. I had no doubt of the blessing. Refining fire had gone through her heart, and illuminated her soul. We were all happy. Then I sung,

> " My soul would sweetly stay,
> In such a frame as this,
> And sit and sing herself away,
> To everlasting bliss."

Our dear sister SCHUYLER lived a few years after, and died in the triumphs of faith. She was taken with spitting blood, and though she was naturally timid, and was apt to faint or be greatly alarmed, at seeing blood, yet now she was composed, and sent for her husband who loved her most tenderly, and justly appreciated her virtues and her superior gifts. He believed in religion, and professed a sacred regard for Christians of all denominations. He was a good scholar, well versed in the sciences, and believed himself to be a Christian, because he was truly an honest man; but did not profess any particular exercise of conviction and sudden conversion of which some others spoke. But he was a kind and affectionate husband and father, a good friend to the poor, and a lover of good men. I cannot say he was not a Christian. He often expressed his full belief in the gospel, and of the deep piety of his wife; and, as he expressed it, " her unusual good

gift in prayer." She also excelled in charity. But when he came into the room as I was informed, and saw his dear wife spitting blood, she said, "My dear, I am going, see, (as she spit out a mouthful of blood) see, these are the harbingers of death." It was so sudden upon him, that he, seemingly off his guard, said, " O Sally, you must not die, you shan't die," and sunk upon the floor, and was seized with the gout in the stomach. His father-in-law, Esquire SANDS, was present, and had him removed to an upper room. A doctor was called to his assistance, who pronounced him dangerously ill. They sent for lawyer ELLIS to make his will, and at intervals when he was able and composed, he would dictate to the lawyer how to write his will. But soon he would inquire after his wife, " how is SALLY? I know she will go to Heaven: I want to go with her." Then the fit would attack him and last for some time. His friends were greatly alarmed for his safety. After his wife was dead, they informed him she was better, but he was not to be deceived, he was confident she was dead. He forbid their taking her away, and seemed flighty. He would start as though he heard the funeral procession. Esquire SANDS kept by him, and soothed him until he was composed, and could hear that she was dead with some degree of composure. Before she died she said to her sister CHRISTINA SANDS, "I bless the Lord that I am a Methodist. By them I heard the doctrine of sanctification, and it was at brother HIBBARD'S, in class-meeting, I experienced the blessing

of perfect love. It is now my consolation. O the boundless love of God. Boundless ! Boundless !" After her death, her husband being so unwell, it was thought best to have her buried in the family burying ground, without any funeral oration or prayer, lest her husband should hear it and relapse again. But our church was hung in mourning, and the next Sabbath a funeral sermon was preached to a large congregation, and it might be truly said they were all mourners. Our church and the community at large, sustained a great loss in the death of sister SALLY SCHUYLER. She was an ornament to religion. It is no disparagement to the female sex to say of her, " Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou hast excelled them all." It was the grace of God that made her triumph in death. Well might Balam say, " Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

Some others were also sanctified unto God, and witnessed a good confession. In Sharon, Canaan, Sheffield, and Mount-Washington, we had good revivals of religion. At Rhinebeck, and a part of Redhook, between twenty and thirty, I trust, were converted ; at Clinton-Town and Pleasant Valley, between fifteen and twenty. We formed a class in Poughkeepsie of eight members, and that number soon increased to twenty-three, and since then to about two hundred. At Beekman, or Oswego, several experienced religion ; and also in Fishkill and the Highlands there were about twenty volunteers, that became good soldiers of the cross. In that part of

Beekman called the Clove, many were brought to know the Lord. I preached at Dr. QUINLIN's. His son has since become a preacher. Near by the Doctor's lived PETER LAWSON, the Quaker Preacher, and his good brother JOHN. Now JOHN was a faithful Quaker, and one of the elders in their meeting ; his wife MARY also, was an elder in the women's meeting. They were both sincere in their profession. JOHN's father had been a Lutheran, and brought up his children in that way, until they heard the Quakers, and joined with them. Now JOHN was a zealous Quaker, he thought it his duty to wear his hat sometimes in time of prayer, which was rather more zealous for the ceremony of the hat, than Quakers in general were inclined to be. Indeed it was rather crowding upon the rule in their discipline, in page 15, where they prohibit their showing dislike to a ministering friend by keeping on the hat in time of prayer. Therefore JOHN, who had promised the Doctor that he would attend the meeting, sent a boy to know of me, if it would be offensive for him to set with his hat on in time of prayer ; and informed me that he sometimes did so in his own meetings. The Doctor asked me about it. I told the Doctor he might set with his hat on, it would not disturb me at all, if he was but sincere in doing it. I added, " that I was so far from being disturbed or offended with it, that if he wanted two hats to wear in time of meeting, I would lend him mine." But the Doctor said nothing to him of this offer ; however, JOHN came and sat with his hat on. I preached

that night, on, "*Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.*" JOHN was convinced that he never was born again, and came to me after meeting, and invited me to his house. His brother PETER, also invited me to his house. So I went with JOHN, and the next day called on PETER. I made free to talk with them, and use my own liberty in the Lord, to pray as I thought was right. JOHN and MARY, and father LAWSON, were all attentive to prayer. JOHN and MARY got converted before long, so they knew something more about religion than they did before, and loved to come to our meetings, and invite the preachers to their house. The Quakers began to deal with them for hearing the Methodists; and PETER, though at first friendly, was directly much opposed to the Methodists, and expressed great concern for brother JOHN. Now PETER, about this time, was accused of having connexion with a woman that was not his wife; though he had a very comely wife, and the young woman he was suspected of having connexion with, had a fine child that was without a father to own it, because she would not swear it to any one. Well, some said one thing, and some another, but the Quakers thought best only to stop PETER from preaching, though evidence was very plain against him. But JOHN and MARY were a great grief to their Quaker friends; again and again they visited JOHN and MARY to persuade them not to go to the Methodist meeting; but they were not to be hindered or abridged, in what they viewed to be their Christian privilege. Very

much labor, however, was bestowed, and truly, every means in the power of the Quakers was resorted to. At last JOHN received a letter, it seemed to be in the hand-writing of his brother PETER, though poorly written, but it was signed "SATAN, *great Prince of Hell.*" This letter was addressed in the following manner: "*To my trusty and well beloved friend* JOHN LAWSON." It then went on to congratulate him on the good service he was rendering him, by going to hear the Methodists, who were his (Satan's) good friends and faithful servants, and that he also was about to leave the Quakers, his (Satan's) greatest enemies. He informed JOHN that if he joined the Methodists, it would be the greatest service he could render him, for the Methodists would consider him as a rare fish, if they could catch him. It was so seldom that a Quaker ever turned Methodist, that if he should join, they would publish it from Quarterly-meeting to Quarterly-meeting.—*Thus*, in this manner he wrote, and then apologized for writing so poorly; for he said, "he had been so hard at work, shovelling fire and brimstone several days, that it made his hands tremble." It appeared that PETER, who followed burning lime, had been hard at work for several days shovelling lime, previous to JOHN's receiving this letter. JOHN felt unwilling to say much about it, for fear it was written by his brother PETER. Some asked, "can Satan write?" Some said, "yes, if he has a good secretary." But no one said, that I know of, "that PETER would not make Satan a good secretary of state," though that

letter was written poorly. Well, who would have believed it, the Quakers expelled JOHN and MARY for going to the Methodist meeting. But PETER was retained a member. And so it happened, in a short time after, PETER's wife died; good woman, no doubt, grief was some part of the cause of her death. But soon after her death, the same young woman that had one child without a father, was like to have another. But I was informed that she said, in plain language to PETER, though she was not a Quaker, "that if he would not marry her, she would swear it upon him." Whereupon he went before a magistrate and took her to wife. This was a plain breach of discipline to marry out of the meeting; but the young woman not being a member of their church, or of any church, could not be married in the meeting; besides, it was several months too late to appear decently in meeting, if she had even been disposed to be a Quaker. But Peter must have had his thoughts at this time: He loved his dear brethren, and knew if he married out of the meeting, he must be turned out; and he was turned out.

When I heard that JOHN was cast out, I found him, as Christ found the man that had been blind, and was cast out of the synagogue for owing him. So it seems JOHN and MARY were cast out for owning the Methodists to be the people of God. I said to JOHN, now you must come forward and join our society. He said, "he did not know that we would take him in." I said, "yes, if you have a desire to flee the wrath to come, and be saved from your sins,

and live a holy life." However, JOHN thought to secure his right to wear his hat; so he mentioned it to the class, and asked them if they were willing he should wear his hat in time of meeting? They said, "yes." He said, "he had thought it his duty to wear his hat, and he did not think his conscience would let him do otherwise."

The brethren knew all this, and believed him sincere. However, he joined, and I was told that the next Sabbath when he came to prayer-meeting, on entering the house he went around by the gallery stairs and hung up his hat; and then came around and sat down on his seat as usual near the altar.—Some on seeing it, smiled to think what an experiment he was trying, to cure himself from the ceremony of hat wearing; and upon experiment JOHN found the good Spirit was with him, as well without his hat as with it; and ever after that he could set in meeting without wearing his hat.

My spirit being grieved with this conduct of the Quakers, concerning my friends JOHN and MARY, I was led to study their history, and acquaint myself with their doctrines. Some things I liked very much, and some things I did not like at all; but on the whole I concluded they were a people calculated to do some good. I thought them kind, honest, and obliging, when they could be so without interfering with their ceremonies.

CHAPTER XII.

One day I was reading in a book called M'Cloud's Essays, and there he related the case of a man that had two heaps, one of *incurables*, and another of *unaccountables*. I thought this a wise plan, so I adopted it, and since then when I have met with any thing unaccountable, after making a fair trial and being unable to account for it, I cast it into the heap of unaccountables, and pass on. And so of the incurables; and now I have two great heaps. I sometimes get an unaccountable, or an incurable, out of the heap, and it would seem that my heap grew less. But it is not so; I believe I throw in two, where I get out one, so that my heaps grow larger every year.

About this time I heard of a difficulty with the people in a certain town in New-England. The people got into a quarrel, one with another, and many efforts were made to reconcile them, but all failed; this would seem one of the incurables. At last they agreed firmly among themselves, to submit their difficulties to the judgment of a certain godly minister, in a distant town; so they appointed two men, one of each party, to wait on the minister, and relate the cause that each party had for dissatisfaction;

and the minister was to write his judgment of the case; then the people would all meet on the day he was to send them his pastoral letter, and have it read by the clerk of the town, and they would all abide by his judgment and counsel. So after the good minister heard the story of the quarrel from the two delegates, and had written his opinion and counsel to them; he had occasion also, (it being in the Spring of the year,) to write a few lines to a farmer, on one of his farms at a small distance. It so happened that the messengers that were to carry the letters both rode up at the same time, and being in a hurry the good man made a mistake, he folded the letters without superscriptions, and gave the letter intended for the farmer to the messenger that came from the town, and sent that for the town to the farmer. Well, the people of the town were all assembled, waiting when the messenger came, and the clerk read the hasty written scroll, as follows:

"You had better see that your fences are put up well in the first place. Plow your ground deep, and sort your seed; be careful not to sow foul seed, and take care of that great ugly bull. I think you had better poke him. The rest I will tell you when I come."

The people on hearing this, were all astonished, and sat for a while in amazement. Some said they could not understand it. At last one arose and said he understood it; that the meaning was all revealed to him. First, He said, the putting up the fences that were down, signifies the discipline of the church.

We have neglected those good rules of discipline, that serve to protect, and guard us against evil passions; and when neglected like a fence thrown down, leave the field open to wild beasts. Secondly, The plowing the ground deep, signifies the breaking up the fallow ground of the heart, that every one should search his own heart, and prepare it for the good seed. Thirdly, The sorting of seed, signifies that we should be careful not to believe every story that is told us; but examine faithfully into every thing, and receive nothing but the truth. We have not done this, but we have been guilty of evil speaking, and of backbiting one another, and we have all done wrong. And Fourthly, As to that great ugly bull, that means the devil; he has done us much harm, and we have not resisted him as we ought to have done, therefore we ought all to unite and resist the devil. This explanation was satisfactory. They all took it as good counsel, and it laid open the true cause of all their troubles. They began to confess their faults one to another, and pray one for another, and soon all their difficulties subsided, and the great wound in the peace of the town was healed.

Very great difficulties are sometimes removed by very simple means, and I ought not to despair of the cure of church divisions, or of any erroneous notions, though I may not be able to do it myself, but I am not excused in the court of my own conscience, unless I try, and when I have done my best, and cannot succeed, I then cast it into the heap of incurables and pass one. But to return to my narrative.

Dutchess county at this time was more favored, than it had been in days past. Religious people of different orders were more engaged in religion, and there was something good going on in different places. James Horton, an exhorter, was a flaming witness for the Lord in Beekman. He had been a rough sinner; but nothing is impossible with God. James was awakened through the instrumentality of the Methodists, and was made a witness that our Lord Jesus Christ forgiveth sins. In his conversion the change was wonderful, from a rough swearing sinner, he became the most docile, meek, humble, loving soul I ever saw. It was soon discovered that James must call sinners to repentance. Indeed, he would exhort, and pray, and sing most sweetly. But he was poor, and worked hard for a living, a shoemaker by trade. I said to James one day, "how much can you earn in a month?" He said "fourteen dollars." "Well," said I, "go with me around the circuit four weeks, and I will give you fourteen dollars." So James put his things to rights, and a friend volunteered the loan of his horse for James to ride, in hopes good would be done. And many prayers were offered up for our success. We went on from the Clove to Dover, and around the circuit. When I had done preaching, James would exhort and pray, and our meetings were attended with Divine unction. Thirteen souls professed to experience religion in those four weeks, and many were awakened. From this time I date the commencement of the good work God was pleased to favor this circuit with, that lasted

for several years, until the number of members had increased to more than *thirteen hundred*, and the circuit was divided into two, called Dutchess and Rhinebeck circuits. I had said to JAMES on setting out, "I shall solicit the brethren to make you some presents privately, and I wish you to keep account, and if you don't get fourteen dollars, I will make it up to you; but you need not say any thing about your poverty." So I spoke privately to those I knew could spare a little and not injure them. Some gave him a quarter of a dollar, some half a dollar, and some more; so that when we got around the circuit, he had about twenty-nine dollars. I asked him if he was not well paid? He said, "yes," and offered to refund all but fourteen dollars. But I said, "no, it is all yours, the Lord has given it to you, be encouraged and be faithful."

One meeting, in Sharon Hollow, I shall never forget. JAMES began to exhort, and the love of God made him eloquent. He portrayed the distressed state of poor sinners without God in the world, and then the rich provision God had made to save them, the love of God in sending his Son to die, and the Spirit to strive with sinners to draw them to Christ, yet sinners would not come, they would not be saved by grace, and made light of the invitations. "O," said he, "my eyes affect my heart. I see precious souls here for whom Christ has died, and I fear they are unconverted; they have been warned and invited to turn to the loving Saviour, but still they put him from them; and what more can be done than has

been done. I pity them, they have no food for their souls, they have no solid comfort now, they can have no comfort in death; soon they must hear the Archangel's trump, 'come to judgment, come to judgment,' and they have no friend to relieve them there. O that I could persuade them to come to my precious loving Jesus; but what can I do? I can do nothing but pity and weep over you. Yes, dear, precious souls, I'll weep over you." He paused, while tears ran down amain, and turning about, he spoke to me in the most melting strain, "O! brother HIBBARD, weep with me, let us weep for poor sinners whom we cannot persuade." By this time tears flowed from every eye, and for several minutes we could hear nothing but weeping and crying through the house. Then some began to pray, so that our meeting lasted till a late hour at night, and five professed to be converted.

We had many other excellent meetings, and the work of God was evidently begun on this circuit: insomuch that souls began to flock into society, like clouds and doves to their windows. After I left the circuit, I was informed by the preacher that followed me, that he took in forty-two members the first time he went around the circuit, and between three and four hundred joined the society that year. These are the Lord's doings, and they are marvellous in our eyes, and rejoicing to my soul.

After living three years at Rhinebeck, on Dutchess circuit, I was appointed to travel Croton circuit, 1805. I moved from Rhinebeck with my family, to

Stephen-Town, since called Somers. I had sent to the circuit stewards to provide me a house; they got me one that had been formerly occupied as as store, near S. WILSON's. Here we lived until the next spring.

Our leaving Rhinebeck was another weeping scene. We had formed a pretty extensive acquaintance, and found very kind neighbors, not only Methodists but Presbyterians and Baptists, and Lutherans; all very kind. And those who made no profession in any Church, were also respectable and kind neighbors. Some had proposed to raise a salary for me, and call me to locate and settle with them. I was waited upon in due form; and I presume they would have raised four or five hundred dollars for me. One informed me that he presumed he could get three hundred dollars subscribed for me by the next day night, if I would consent to stay; and he would not ask one cent of the Methodists. Several urged me hard to stay there. At last I submitted it to my wife. If she said stay, I would locate and stay with them. At this they seemed pleased; but my wife desired time to think of it. They consented she might have till the next morning. She laid the whole matter before the Lord in prayer, and got her answer, just as I had done before. So the next morning she said, it will not do for you to locate. The Lord has blessed you in this calling, and if you locate contrary to his will you may be cursed, and I had rather suffer with you and have the blessing of the Lord, than enjoy the comforts of this life and suffer the curse. When

they heard this opinion, they were astonished, and said, I hope the Lord will bless you; we did not mean to urge you to your own injury.

Now parting from such sincere friends, was truly painful. However, we sustained it without shame, for the tears we shed. I had many, very many friends on this circuit—all of whom I received from the Lord as a reward of my labors. One thing more I must mention that was a means of the revival of religion on Dutchess circuit, before I leave this part of my narration. I was impressed with the necessity of a concert of prayer. I therefore called the attention of the brethren in the classes all around the circuit, to covenant with me to arise in the morning before sun-rise, and spend a little time in secret prayer, precisely at sun-rise, and follow this every morning for three months—let nothing hinder from rising so early, but ill health. I wished they would signify their willingness to covenant with me by rising up. All but a few arose, and heartily covenanted. Having gone once around the circuit, and got nearly all into the covenant, I found my best time of day after this, was sun-rise. I never missed awaking before sun-rise but once, and that was attended with something very peculiar. I had preached at Tower Hill, and our meeting lasted till late in the night, when I retired to bed fatigued, but happy. I dreamed just before I awoke, that I was at Amenia at brother POWERS,' and the society were all present for meeting, the brothers POWERS and INGRAHAM, and their families were there, and I saw their souls all shining with

glory. I thought, now I see things as I have wanted to see them: I never saw the hearts and souls of people before, and they all were devoted to God with a brilliancy that manifested the purifying love of God. I was so animated with this sight, that I awoke and found the sun had just arisen. I thought surely God has given me this dream to awake me in season to join the concert of prayer. It appeared to me that my dream was in answer to prayer; at least I began to dream of seeing the shining souls of the brothers and sisters in that place, five or six minutes before I awoke, which was about the time they began to pray in secret, and they always remembered me in their prayers; besides, I had most earnestly prayed the Lord to awake me by sun-rise, that I might pray in secret at the same time my brethren did. This covenant had a peculiarly good effect. It served to quicken the brethren to duty, and taught them to rise early in the morning. To lounge in bed after sun-rise, summer or winter, is a great evil, unless in the case of doctors and sick persons who have been long broken of their rest. But some hysterical women, and hypochondrical men, have indulged in a habit of lying in bed in the morning, whereas nothing can be worse for them. I cured one who had been bed-ridden twelve years, by advising her to arise before sun-rise, and drink a wine-glass of cold spring water that run out of the ground on the west side of a hill, putting into it a tea-spoonful of Indian meal, and then pray to the Lord. I believe awaking in the morning and walking fifty yards in a pure air, which she was

able to do after the first week, and prayer to God at this early hour, was the best part of the remedy. But drinking a little cold water is good, and a tea-spoonful of Indian meal will hurt no one. In eight weeks she was able to attend a meeting half a mile off, and gave glory to God for her cure. Some doctors may call this a piece of quackery; but if I perform a cure by simple means, I hope they will allow me the credit of it, seeing I got no pay for my counsel. To rise early and pray to God, is good for health, wealth, and virtue; and prayer for the sick is recommended by Divine inspiration. Let doctors call that quackery if they dare.

I had brother JOHN ROBERTSON for my colleague on Croton circuit. We prayed for the conversion of three hundred that year, and I believe we had about that number converted, though they all did not join society. Our first camp-meeting in this district, was last year, in the town of Carmel, on this circuit; and this year we had a camp-meeting at Croton, on Gen. PHILLIP VAN COURTLANDT's land, and it was a great time of the power of God among us; hundreds were awakened and converted at this meeting. Here I first introduced the practice of marching around a praying circle to sing. This diverted the multitude from crowding on those that were praying in the circles; they would face about as we passed around to see us. This has had a very good effect in our camp-meetings since, when it is properly attended to. I calculated that about four hundred were awakened and converted, as the fruits of this camp-meeting.

By what I heard from the different circuits, and from New York afterwards, and by what I knew of the good effects on our circuit, there must have been not less than four hundred, though there was not this number converted at the meeting, yet I think there were more than one hundred who professed to be converted there. New York shared largely in the good effects of camp-meetings. Our friends from the city improved the means well, and were greatly blessed.

I travelled this circuit two years, and at the close of the first year, I begged money to build a parsonage-house at Croton; so I moved from Somers to Croton about the first of May, as our Conference would sit about the middle of the month, and this would close our Conference year. I got the workmen building the house, and in about two months we moved into it. Here we lived in peace and quiet, found good friends, and had many good meetings.

The second year I had brother JOHN FINEGAN for my colleague. Our circuit was greatly blessed. Peekskill and up the Hollow in the Highlands, Somertown, South and North Salem, South Easttown, New Fairfield, Pawlingstown, as well as Croton and Courtlandt-town, were all blessed with a most glorious display of the divine favor. I had my difficulties in begging money enough to build the parsonage house, and pay off the preachers and myself. For at the first quarterly meeting, though brother ROBERTSON was a single man, yet after paying off the expenses and his quarterage, I had but twenty-nine cents

for my share for that quarter; but the next quarter the collections overrun, so that I got some part of my deficiency; and, on the whole, at the close of the year, I was not more than one hundred and twenty dollars deficient, reckoning children and all. And at the close of two years, I was able to pay off the cost of the parsonage house, except sixty dollars for the ground, and fifty dollars that I had not collected. I lived about ten months in the new parsonage house, and intended to take my time to move out, but one of the preachers that followed me, was in a great hurry at first to move in, so I hurried to move out. I had said to my wife, before I received my appointment to New Rochelle circuit, that I should be sent there the next year. It now became a rule of discipline, that the Bishop should not appoint a preacher more than two years successively on the same circuit. I therefore knew that I must be moved off, but I said to her, "that I thought I would hire a house in as wicked a neighborhood as I could find on the circuit." She said, "well, I am willing." And so it was, I was stationed in New Rochelle, and had brothers M. B. BULL, H. REDSTONE, and E. CANFIELD, for my colleagues. Brother CANFIELD was supernumerary, and a single man; the other brethren were married, and though the presiding elder's dividend, which was estimated according to the number of preachers on a circuit, and their claims laid a double portion on our circuit, yet notwithstanding this, I paid them all off, but I was rather more deficient this year than usual.

I had become acquainted with Dr. J. PIERCE. He came to board with us and to teach my children, some in the Latin, and some in the English languages. I gave him my money, the earnings of my dear wife while at Rhinebeck, and directed him to go to New York, and lay it all out for an assortment of drugs and medicine. His misfortunes and wickedness before he got converted, had left him entirely destitute of means for a support, and as he was truly converted from Deism and other wickedness, and had been recommended to me as a man that had been strictly honest in money matters, even while he was wicked; so I had no hesitation in reposing confidence in him. He was well educated in the science of physic, and could teach the Latin language well. My sons JOHN and WILLIAM were put to the study of Latin. Father GARRETTSON had said to me before, that he would expend a thousand dollars to educate JOHN, and clothe him from that time until he was fit to go into such business as should be thought best, and it was left to me to choose his college, &c. Therefore this plan to prepare him for college, I thought would be a good one, as Dr. P—— would have his board with us for teaching my children, and the use of the druggist shop for his practice. So we were both supplied with medicines from the shop. He kept the account of all he used, &c. We had no expectation of getting rich, but we were in hopes of getting an honest living.

It so happened, when I went to the circuit to find a place to move into, that there was none to be had,

except a house in Greensburg, four corners. This had been a tavern stand for many years, and was accounted the wickedest place in all these parts. Taverns are apt to make people wicked. But I rented the place for sixty dollars a year, and found after we moved in, that the neighbors were not so wicked as some thought for, at any rate we found them to be good neighbors, kind and obliging. Here was ISAAC VAN WART, one of the three that took Major ANDRE, the spy, in the revolutionary war. ISAAC and his family were very kind to us as neighbors. And there was Mr. CAMPBELL and WILLIAM HAMMOND, as good neighbors as we could wish for —true they were not Methodists; but I preached in my own hired house, and they and many others came to hear me. After my wife and Betsy Williams, an adopted child, who lived with us, had cleaned the house from the garret to the cellar, so that all the tavern filth was cleansed out; I invited all my neighbors to come in, and I preached to them on Acts xxviii. 30, 31. It was a profitable thing to the neighborhood to turn the tavern into a preaching house. Thirteen professed to experience religion in this neighborhood this year, chiefly children and young people. My sons, JOHN and WILLIAM, both experienced religion at the camp meeting this season, and were happy in the love of God.

In the fall, Dr. PIERCE and I, felt convinced that our plan would never do. He could not get practice as a physician, sufficient to make a living. And I was not able to pay his wages, so he concluded to go

to Fayetteville, in North Carolina, and wished me to give him a letter to Dr. SCHRIEVES in New York, to take up an assortment of drugs to carry on with him. I did so, and he left us. About four weeks after, I left, I went to New York, and found him at Dr. SCHRIEVES'. He had all his things put up ready to sail, and had been waiting for a vessel, until he had spent all his money but thirty-one cents, and now he was in distress. It was intimated to me that he had talked of giving up his journey to Carolina. He was a stranger in New York, and had no friend but me to help him, and I was myself without money. He said nothing to me how he should get along; I conjectured he was in want of money to bear his expenses, so I took him aside in private, and asked him if he had money to pay his passage. With a tear in his eye, he said, "I have but two and sixpence." I asked him how much he wanted. He said, "fifteen dollars." I said, "if you can send it to me in a letter by mail, after you arrive, I can borrow it for you." He said he would. I borrowed the money of a friend of mine, and gave it to him privately.

My dear wife having witnessed the fulfilment of many things, which I had told her were revealed to me by the Lord, when I was twelve years old, now began to feel uneasy respecting the event that was to take place this year. I was never positive what that event would be, but it was the death of some one. I dared not say I was to die; but if it was not my death, it was the death of some one near and dear to me. She often asked me, if I had a particular one pointed out.

I said no; but sometimes I had thought it was myself that was to die; but be that as it may, if I am faithful to God, all will be well. This year I was thirty-six years old, and some extraordinary event was to happen to me. It was the last sabbath in November, that we had our quarterly meeting in New Rochelle. My son JOHN had gone to the town of Rye, to attend some prayer-meetings with some boys of his age that had been converted at the camp meeting. I directed him to meet me at the quarterly meeting. But he took a cold, which brought on an inflammation of the brain, so that he only came on as far as brother SCHUREMAN'S, where I found him after ten o'clock at night. On feeling his pulse, I found it indicated a high degree of inflammation. But some said it was the effect of his exercise; he had been very happy in meeting. I gave him a cathartic, in hopes of giving relief by morning, when he seemed somewhat better. But when I returned from meeting at two o'clock, I found him worse. Sent for Dr. ROGERS, who advised to bleed, and lay on large blisters. But I despaired of success. Monday he was worse. I sent home BETSEY and WILLIAM, who had come with me to the meeting. Brother S——, was so kind as to take them home, and bring my wife the same day. JOHN knew his mother but could not hear her speak; at which she wept. But he was happy in God. He said, "I am willing to die, and I think it better for me to die than to live."

On Tuesday, he continued to grow worse; toward

evening he lost his speech, but his hearing seemed to return. He looked to me, strove to speak; and beckoned to have me pray with him; we all kneeled by his bed, he closed his hands and looked up, then closed his eyes and attended to prayer. When I had done, he looked up upon me, made the usual sign of his head as when he bade farewell, turned to his mother and made the same sign, then looked around on others standing by, and instantly changed for death. When I saw this, I repeated these lines of the poet,

> "Come Angels, come Angels, he's ready to fly,
> Come quickly, convey him to God in the sky."

The power of the Lord was manifest in an instant. I had no doubt, but angels hovered around us. He died easy, but when his breath left him, and his spirit took its flight, his mother cried out. I turned to her and said, "my dear, let there be no complaining—God and his angels are here, let there be no complaining." He died on the second of December, aged thirteen years, four months and two days.

The next day my wife and I went home to prepare for the funeral. My wife said she must have some things from the store, to prepare some of the children for this solemn occasion. I had no money, not having received my quarterage. I said, "this is rather trying to us, I am not much acquainted with the merchant." But I said, "we will call, and if he will trust me I will get the articles you need, if not, we must do without them." When we came

into his store, (being also post-master,) he said "I have a letter in the office for you"—and reached it to me. I saw it was post marked twenty-five cents. I felt strangely, to think I had not even money enough to pay for it. I opened it, however, and found the fifteen dollars enclosed, that I had lent to my friend Dr. PIERCE; so I paid for all that I wanted. My wife said, "truly the Lord will provide." When we arrived to our house, the children came out to inquire how their brother JOHN was, and on informing them he was dead, WILLIAM sunk into my arms and cried, "O father, what shall I do?" We bore our children into the house as well as we could, and sat down by them and wept. After this we all joined in prayer. And in this exercise we found comfort. I asked the Lord if I was to meet with any other affliction this year, and said, "Lord, is this bereavement all?" I felt the answer to my soul, that this was all; and said to my family, I believe the death of JOHN, is all we shall be called to mourn for now. But his death to us was great cause of grief. Father GARRETTSON lost his pupil; and by this death, were frustrated all the benevolent designs of Mr. and Mrs. GARRETTSON, in his education. They had formed these benevolent designs, not only because they thought his genius would be so improved by education, as to make him very useful to society, but in hopes that he might also be a support to us, and an honor to his benefactors.—Had he lived, I have no doubt their expectations would have been realized, and the comfort they would have derived from the success of their design,

would have been a source of satisfaction to them in their old age. But he is gone,—he is no more with us. And though I believe he is in a better world, yet I grieve for my loss. O my heart, why dost thou pain me so? God's will is best, and all is well; and yet my throbbing heart will not let me rest.—When he was dying I was a man. I rejoiced in God, and would not let my wife complain; angels filled the house, and God is with me still. But why does my heart grieve? why can I not sleep? I have other children left; my wife is sleeping by my side, and here I bathe my pillow with tears. So it was with me at times when alone, by day or by night, and no one knew my grief. But when I came into company or with my family, I was blessed with some degree of composure. But on the day of the funeral, the scene was more affecting. Our friends mourned with us. The family where he died, was exceeding kind. Sister S—— told me, "that she had been always subject to a fear and dread, when she entered a room where a dead corpse lay, till now; but on entering that room, (pointing to the one JOHN was laid out in) I feel a peculiar delight," said she. "As I cross the threshold, it seems as though a perfume meets me: I cannot account for it otherwise, than that God has in a special manner, blessed us in having him die here. Truly, as you say, the angels of God are in the house; my children can hardly be persuaded to leave the room. I saw one setting in the room in the dark of the evening, and I asked him why he sat there alone, and called him to come out;

but he wept and said, 'O mother, let me stay here, it seems I can't be out of this room, I want to set here.' And she added, it is so with all that come in, they manifest a pleasure in being in the room.'"

After prayer in the house, by brother BULL, who preached on the occasion, before we went to the meeting-house for public worship, they removed the corpse out into the door-yard to form the procession. When the children of this kind family perceived that they were about to take the corpse away, they cried out in a vehement manner, "O mamma! don't let them take him away; mamma! don't let them take him away!" It was some time before they could be pacified. This to me was truly affecting. If they who are strangers are so unwilling to part with him, what ought not I to feel? After the sermon at the meeting-house, I arose and thanked the people for their sympathy with me on this occasion; and at the grave I desired a grave-stone to be placed at the head, in memory of his death, with these lines under the inscription, as my last act and prayer for him:

May death's best slumbers occupy thy urn,
The turf that hides thee, nature's livery wear,
O, be thou sacred in the silent bourn,
Till time rolls round the great sabbatic year.

My kind friends at New Rochelle took all the expense upon themselves, for which I hope to be ever thankful. This year closes with a scene I had anticipated for more than twenty years! now I am satis-

fied, though before I could not be positive who it was that should die. Now I have a plain answer to prayer, that this death embraces all the loss I shall meet with at present.

But it had been also manifested to me at the time alluded to, that I should have many difficulties to surmount, and that the zeal which would inspire me to oppose dead formality in professed Christians, would awake indignation against me. This made me sometimes think my own death was meant, and that possibly I should be a martyr for the cause of Christ. Dead formality seemed to reign over professors generally throughout this region; and the people called Quakers, though they denied ordinances and professed to be led by the Spirit, were yet as formal as any class of people I know of. Though their forms differed from those of other denominations, and they professed much of the Spirit and inward work, nevertheless, there were many of them who were strangers to the blood that redeemed them, and bought their pardon on the tree; and though I had thought them an inoffensive and pious sort of people, and that they would never persecute others, yet their treatment of my friends, JOHN and MARY LAWSON, convinced me that they did not like the Methodists, and that they also would persecute. I found on reading their authors, that they used many epithets no ways agreeable to that charity which they professed, such as *blind, carnal*, not yet in the *true light, enemies* to them, &c. and yet to profess fellowship with such, was wholly inconsistent, in my opinion. The letter my friend JOHN LAWSON received, *signed*, "SATAN, GREAT PRINCE OF HELL," was undoubtedly dictated by Satan himself; but I believe it was written by a Quaker, who professed great charity; and these epithets of *blind, carnal*, &c, did not appear to me, to be applied by them, to professors of religion, because they were immoral, or not pious; but because they worshipped God in the use of ordinances; it seemed to me they viewed baptism, the Lord's supper, and other religious ordinances, as pernicious and delusive. I therefore judged them in my own mind to be in an error, and hostile to the true spirit of the Gospel. To defend the Gospel therefore, I wrote the pamphlet entitled the "Errors of the Quakers."

This pamphlet made a great noise; and I was accused by the Quakers of writing falsehood. A high accusation indeed! That I wrote severely is true; but that I wrote any falsehood, is not true. I defied the Quakers, or any other people whatever, to prove one falsehood in all I wrote. I offered to submit it to the judgment of five candid and impartial men, that knew the nature of evidence. But this method of investigation, they prudently declined. If there is a falsehood in any thing I have written, I am not aware of it. I think it grievous to be accused by them, while they refuse to adopt any legal measures to convict me. They promised the presiding elder, (as he informed me,) that they would prefer a complaint to the conference against me. This would have been a legal measure; but they did not do it. I

was in hopes they would, for I wished an investigation to take place, since I ought not to be condemned before I am tried. But it seems I cannot have that favor. Our conference was informed that they had promised to prefer their complaint ; and postponed the examination of my character one day, until a committee appointed by the conference, had waited on some of the principal Quakers in New York, to know of them whether they should appear against me with their accusations, &c. After waiting on them, the committee reported that they said they should not appear ; so I had no trial for want of an accuser.— Whether they contemplated an answer, and employed THOMAS WILLIS to make it out or not, instead of a legal complaint, I cannot say. But Mr. WILLIS' reply to what I wrote respecting the erroneous doctrines of the Quakers, is a demonstrative proof of the truth of what I wrote, and no refutation at all. Witness Mr. SCOTT's remarks on his publication. And as to his contradicting some things, which Mr. SCOTT has not noticed, I have only to say, Mr. WILLIS labors under a mistake in what he has stated ; and such a mistake too, that he would find himself at a loss to prove the truth of his assertions, if he dared to appear before five candid men, that are capable of judging of the nature of evidence; or if he would submit it to the decision of the five judges of the Supreme Court of this state, and they pronounce me guilty, I will pay all the costs, and such penalties as they may award ; on the contrary, if he does not prove me guilty, he shall pay the cost, and such damage as they

may consider me entitled to, for the sufferings I have endured from their slanderous reports.

To correct an error of my own, respecting the Quakers, I shall state, that I formerly thought that all the Quakers held the opinions professed by ELIAS HICKS and T. WILLIS : but in this I have since found myself mistaken ; I find some do not hold as ELIAS H. does, neither is he approved of by all of them. If he was, I should pronounce them all complete deists, not Christians, but deists in full measure. But some I know are not advocates of his opinions. With respect to him and his party, I do not expect any forgiveness from some of them, for what I have written, either in this world, or in the world to come, neither do I ask any. If I were really guilty of writing falsehoods, and they were Christians, they would prove their charge of falsehood before they condemn me. But as this is not the case, I never can be forgiven by them, world without end.

It may be that some may think they proved me guilty of falsehood, at a public meeting we had in New Rochelle. The method and matter of proof, are too ridiculous for sensible men to boast of ; but such as they were, I must give the reader a sample or two, and let him judge for himself. To prove me guilty of falsehood, they said, " Thou hast said the Quakers deny the Scriptures ?" I answered, " I have not said it." " Ah, well, thee said they denied the Scripture to be the *word of God?*" " Yes, now you have got it right. Well, do you believe the

Scriptures are the *word of God?*" After a little cavilling, they answered "NO." "Well, where is my falsehood then?" "Why, thee says it is an *error*, and it is not an error, and there are many other falsehoods." "Well," I said, "point me out another?" "Well, thee says the Quakers deny the resurrection! but we hold to a resurrection." "Do you hold to the resurrection *of the body?* that is the question." Again after some cavilling, they answered "NO." "Well," so I said, "where then is my falsehood?" "Why, thee says it is an ERROR, and it is not an error." This is a fair sample of their method of proving me guilty. I cannot say but I felt some shame, and have ever since, not for any crime laid to my charge, but for the silly arguments they made use of to prove their accusation. I now no longer wonder that ELIAS HICKS is so celebrated among them, as he is also among Deists, as they are not governed by Scripture testimony or truth: but their opinion is their rule.—Not by fruits do they judge me—their imagination, or their own spirit seems to be their guide, not the Spirit of the Lord, or the word of his grace.

ELIAS seems to have an inveterate spleen against the Scriptures. I once heard him labor to prove that the Scriptures were of no use in teaching us the knowledge that God is love. And speaking of redemption by the death and sufferings of Jesus Christ, he said, "it was a carnal *error* to believe we were redeemed by the sufferings and death of Christ."—Now I think this is Deism in full measure. ELIAS HICKS is a great man among some Quakers, and very

positive in his opinion. But the Apostle Peter was a great man too, in my opinion, and he says, "we were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious BLOOD of Christ," 1 Peter i: 18, 19. So ELIAS and the Apostle Peter, must dispute this point. I know some Quakers will side with ELIAS, at all events, for I heard that one said, "he believed ELIAS HICKS was a greater man than Jesus Christ!" Now if this should be the case, I doubt whether ELIAS will dispute the matter at all; he will only have to say to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan." But ELIAS has not shown so great a contempt of the Bible as some Deists have, for I have heard of several that burnt their Bibles, and of one that roasted his Bible before a slow fire; but I expect that ELIAS reads his Bible sometimes, and has arrived at so high an opinion of himself and of the Spirit that governs him, that he is not afraid the Bible will injure him, or the people that receive his doctrine; therefore he makes his Bible his text-book sometimes, which is shewing it greater respect than to roast it before his fire. But he has been heard to say, "that the Bible does no good." However, he labors hard, and has but few silent meetings, to explain away the Bible, or, as I have heard him call it, the "*writings of men.*"

I believe the Quakers have been grossly deceived by ELIAS HICKS. He has a peculiar gift in allegorizing; and as the Quakers labor to understand all Scripture revelation to have a spiritual sense, and study to explain the spiritual sense, insomuch that

they have often treated the literal sense with neglect, and sometimes with contempt, therefore outward ordinances have been rejected by them, and esteemed as erroneous, so that they verily think those who believe in outward ordinances to be deceived. They account them but shadows ; and express a sincere concern lest any should be deceived with shadows. One asked me, after hearing Elias Hicks, how I liked him ; and if I did not think people were in danger of being deceived with shadows? I replied, that it was possible that some might be. But generally people know better than to eat their knives and forks, instead of using them to eat their food. And in buying a load of wood, they would not buy the shadow of the load. Neither would a carpenter line and hew the shadow of a tree for a stick of timber. You cry out against shadows, said I, and I read in the Bible of one who said unto the Almighty, "I have sat under thy shadow with great delight." By a shadow we learn two essential things. First, a substance. Second, light shining on that substance, that occasions the shadow. True religion is a substance ; the light of the spirit shining on that substance, makes the ordinance or shadow. Now if your religion had any substance in it, you would have ordinances too. But where there is no substance, light cannot make a shadow.

These observations displeased him. But at other times I have spoken favorably of the Quakers ; I have said without flattery, I believed many of them were sincere and good men, and that they had been

instrumental of doing good. This has pleased them. They love to hear themselves praised, as well as other people. But I would not flatter them to their injury. I find if I agree with them in sentiments, they like me very well. But if I differ from them, (which I would not do, if I thought their sentiments correct,) they judge me their enemy ; and I am every thing that is bad. To call their sentiments erroneous is a sin against Elias Hicks not to be forgiven by him or his party in this world, nor the world to come. But if I speak against the sentiments of the Calvinists and call them erroneous, that is no sin : and good reason for it, for the Presbyterians and Baptists have such real religion that they would not anathematize a man merely because he differs from them in opinion ; and I am sure I should not differ from them in doctrines, if I did not think that those doctrines about which we differ were erroneous ; so neither would they differ from me, unless they thought my sentiments were erroneous. But I never knew one to call me a liar because I said his opinion was erroneous.

Those sentiments or customs which we think most essential in forming our good character, and which yield us the greatest degree of happiness, we embrace with the most cordial affection. And that which we think to be our greatest happiness, and most consistent with truth, we support and defend. Yes, we are all alive to the sentiments and customs we most love. The statesman talks of politics. The warrior of battles. The lawyer of suits and courts, and

law terms, and technicals and fees. The doctor of medicine and diseases. The mechanic of his art. The farmer of agriculture. The minister of religion. And the coquette and prude, the coxcomb and dandy, are all attention about their dress and affected looks. Some paint to look handsomer, and some to deceive; some are religious for the Lord's sake, and some for their own sake.—Some to repair a lost reputation, and some to save their souls. Some to get money; and some to serve God. And our dandies and coquettes sometimes become religious. The one to seek a mistress, and the other a gallant. Religion has been abused in all ages, and in all countries, by some of all denominations; and probably by none more shamefully than by the Methodists and Quakers; because they profess so much perfection, and experience of spiritual knowledge; and I believe many of them do possess much spiritual knowledge. But how many have we in the present day who put on a saintish appearance and roll up the eye with solemn groan, as though they were greatly affected with a concern for the glory of God and the good of men. How solemn they appear, how plain they dress, and yet how they will lie or equivocate to get a good bargain.

But one thing that I desired to accomplish by writing my address to the Quakers, I have realized to my satisfaction, and that was, a clear statement of their principles. Their principles were expressed so ambiguously, that there were many disputes or doubts

of their real meaning. I wished to provoke some answer to my writings that would settle those disputes and doubts, and produce from them an avowal of their real sentiments. This I think is effected. Whoever therefore, shall read my address to the Quakers, and then read Thomas Willis' reply to it; and then Mr. Scott's answer to Mr. Willis, will be fully acquainted with the doctrines of the Quakers. I wish the sentiments of all denominations distinctly expressed, that they might be easily known. I confess that the practice of the Methodists in spreading their discipline, and plainly avowing their doctrines, gave me a prediliction for them when I first heard them; I then said, surely these men cannot be deceivers. There is no mark of deception in them. But when people hide their opinions from public view, either by secreting their discipline, or expressing themselves ambiguously, look out for deceivers. Let them be of what denomination they will, they are deceivers. They may profess great love and be very soft and pliable, and intimate that they have no creed but the bible, they would hardly contradict the devil himself, they are so charitable. But mind ye, they are sly butchers of the truth.

In these times no doctrine is more hated than Christian perfection, and none is enforced more emphatically in the Bible than, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

But many had rather not understand this, than to understand it. And many that do understand it,

would rather preach it to others, than live holy lives themselves. But what is that to me, I must understand it and live according to what I preach to others.

CHAPTER XIII.

We had a most glorious work on New Rochelle circuit, and my soul enjoyed a sweet peace with God, and fellowship with my brethren. I never found the Lord a barren wilderness, nor his fruit unpleasant to my taste. It is true I have often thought I had but little grace, and that of the common kind: and frequently I have said in my heart, surely I am the least of all God's creatures. But these kind of feelings, I did not talk about much, and I pitied those that did. Some accounted those exercises a darkness of the mind, others doubted whether they ever had religion, and it amounted to nothing less than an indirect complaining of the bread of life. I remembered when on Dutchess circuit, I called to see old father Burt in Canaan. He was truly a good old saint, and a member of the Church of England. When I entered his house, I saw he looked pale and dejected. I asked him what was the matter, "what ails you, sir?" "O," said he, "I have got one of my poor turns; I am in the dark. Was you ever in the dark?" said he. I said, "I don't know what you call being in the dark. How do you feel when you are in the dark?" "Feel!" said he, "I feel less than the least

of all God's creatures!" "Do you?" said I, "then I have been in the dark the most of my days. But I don't call that being in the dark, I call it the light of God shining in the clearest manner upon me, for I think I must have very clear light to see a little object." "You're right, you're right," said he, rising up with a countenance cheerful as a summer morning, and clapping his hands, "you're right, I'll never call it being in the dark again." This dear man lived a few years after, and died happy in the Lord, without a cloud to darken his sky.

Though I have had many days and hours in which I have felt myself small and unworthy, yet I never could think it profitable to talk about it much, lest I should undervalue the ordinary blessings of God's grace. I have heard some complain of their leanness and dulness of mind, and it reminded me of some weak women that I have known, that would always complain of their dirt, and rags, and poor victuals. One said, "her victuals was so poor, that it was not fit to eat," so brother JAYNE moved back, and would not eat. She observed it, and kindly asked him why he did not? "I believe *mam*," said he, "that you are a woman of truth, and you say it is not fit to eat, and I believe you." She had the mortification to recall her words, and confess her folly. But I have thought if it be folly in a cook to spread a table with choice and wholesome food, and invite a friendly guest to partake of it, and then introduce it to them as a filthy mess, what is it for creatures that are invited to a Gospel feast, where the provision is spiritual,

though represented by the figures of "my oxen and fatlings are killed," and of "butter and honey, and milk and wine, well refined, and pure water of life,' and the invitation is, "ho! every one that thirsts, come ye to the waters, eat and drink abundantly, O beloved." What is it for creatures to say the provision is not fit to eat, but a base insult? And how many refuse to partake of the grace of God, because it is common grace? They don't believe that the ordinary measure of God's grace can save them, and this unbelief will damn their souls if they continue in it. It is an easy matter to believe that a great measure of grace can save us; but the small, or ordinary measures are sufficient also, if they are received and improved. So our ordinary meals of wholesome food are sufficient to sustain life if we eat them; but neither those, nor extraordinary feasts, would do us any good if we did not eat.

But my Calvinist brethren have troubles of a different kind. They are troubled with sin, in thought, word, and deed. At least they say so; and I suppose some of them are. But I do not believe it is the case with all; for there are many holy men of the Presbyterian, Congregational, and Baptist churches. But their peculiar articles of faith, oblige them to say they commit sin, in order to practice what they profess. Their principle is therefore erroneous, while they are good men; and though I hate the principle that deludes them, I do not hate them, but I wish, sincerely wish, to bring them to see the truth in those matters. We had some that held those sentiments

on this circuit ; but their preachers were not willing to preach out their doctrines plainly ; I mean those doctrines that constituted them Calvinists. They held to some of the true doctrines of the gospel, and preached them ; only they corrupted their preaching, by now and then infusing the poison of Calvinism. But lately they seemed to take a new method of preaching. I was informed that in an association in Connecticut near by, a celebrated D. D. advised the clergy to preach as near like the Methodists as they could ; and not preach Calvinistic doctrines in their own town, but to change with a minister of another town, for the purpose of preaching doctrines ; and then the people of their own town would not be offended with the minister, on account of his doctrines. This was spoken of by some of the delegates that attended the association as a great stoop and condescension on their part, towards a reconciliation or union with the Methodists,—now then for union! Union was all the cry in places where there was a work of religion. Now they believed almost all the doctrines that the Methodists did ; only perfection and falling from grace ; these they could not believe ; and these they said we ought to give up, and then we should meet them half way. For they had given up that ugly doctrine of unconditional election and eternal decrees, and that Christ died for only a part. And now they believed in free grace, and that man was a moral agent, and election was conditional. O what a fine time it was with some people now—Presbyterians are all coming over to be Methodists.—" Well,"

said one and another, " Brother, don't preach doctrines here now ; I am afraid it will hurt the work of religion. Our Calvinist minister don't preach doctrines any more, but he preaches just like a Methodist. O, I wish you could hear him—why he said in plain words, that Christ died for all, and that man was a moral agent, and he proved it so plain from the scripture ; and I have heard many say that they never heard it so clearly proved in all their lives before ; and he never said one word against the Methodists. Now, brother, I think it would be well not to preach doctrines. I said, " Brother, why may I not preach doctrines as well as the Calvinist minister ; I believe Christ died for all, and grace is free, and man is a moral agent : and why may I not preach it too ?" " O yes, brother," said he, " but don't accuse the Calvinists with holding to unconditional election and eternal decrees ; for the minister in this place don't believe it ; I heard him almost say so ; I heard him say, he did not think they were profitable to preach up, and he would not preach them ; yes, I heard him say this with my own ears."

The system of opposition to the Methodists seemed now to be quite new, though some thought opposition was done away. We were no longer called wolves in sheep's clothing, nor deceivers ; but we were a Christian people, and had done some good. We were not allowed to be a learned people ; but we were a sincere people ; and our want of learning was a matter of grief, and not of disgrace. It was said by some, that if our ministers were men of

learning, so as to read the Bible in the Hebrew and Greek, we should soon give up the doctrines of perfection and falling from grace. And this sentiment coming from ministers professing the knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, gave me queer feelings. The frequent encomiums I heard on college education, led me to think, if I have not that school education, I will not despise it; but while I see an unwise use made of learning, I think the opinion of an ancient philosopher, worth more than gold. He said, "Our danger is the being mistaken in *things*, not in words; and in the *confounding good and evil*." There is a world of things to be studied and learned, and therefore we should discharge the mind of things unnecessary, to make way for greater matters. The business of the school is rather to play than study, and only to be done when we can do nothing else. There are many people who frequent them only to hear, not to learn; and they take notes too, not to reform their manners, but to pick up words, which they vent, with as little benefit to others, as they heard them themselves. It costs us a great deal of time, and other men's ears a great deal of trouble, to purchase the character of a learned man; wherefore I shall even content myself with the coarse title of an *honest man*; the worst of it is, that there is a vain and idle pleasure in it, which tempts us to squander away many a precious hour to very little purpose; we spend the time, and worry ourselves upon subtleties, which may perchance make us thought to be learned, but not good. Wisdom delights in openness and simplicity,

in the forming of our lives, rather than in niceties of the schools, which, at best, do but bring us pleasure without profit. And in short, the things which the ministers impose upon us with so much pride and vanity, are little more than the same lessons over again, which they learned at school. But some authors have their names, though their discourses are mean enough: they dispute and wrangle, but they do not edify any farther than as they keep us from ill-doing, or stop us in our speed to wickedness. Our forefathers have left us not only their inventions, but matter also for farther inquiry; and perhaps they might have found out more things that are necessary, if they had not bent their thoughts too much upon superfluities.

Is not this a a fine time to be fiddling and fooling about words? How many useful and necessary thing are there, that we have first to learn? And secondly, to imprint in our minds? For it is not enough to remember and to understand, unless we do what we know. For as the poet says,

> "To say well and do well, both end with a letter,
> To say well is good, but to do well is better."

I remember when I was on Dutchess circuit, that in returning from a quarterly meeting in Amenia, to Rhinebeck, in the winter, I broke down my cutter, near a tavern where a number of sleighs from Sharon had stopped to bait, as they were going to Rhinebeck. I asked them to take my broken cutter on heir load, and I would ride my horse. They seem-

ed obliging enough when I offered them full pay for their trouble. They did not know me; but they were talkative enough among themselves.—One topic of discourse was, "whether any man could live without sin?" All agreed they could not. An old man of the company put the question, "can *you* live without sin?" "No." "Can *you?* And *you?*" And so on till he got all their opinions. Then he turned to me, "and can *you*, sir?" I said, "it is according to what state I live in; now I live in New York state, and you live in Connecticut; the laws are different in some respects here, to what they are there, and though I do things here that would be contrary to your law in that state, yet it is no sin, because there is no law here against it, and where there is no law there is no transgression." He said, (a little pettishly), "I don't mean so, I mean the law of God." "But, sir, God has a great many laws, which of them do you mean? for if I lived under some of them I should transgress. But to live under others, I need not." "Why," said he, "God has but one law." "O yes, sir, I read of the ceremonial law, and the law of works; and the Apostle says, 'boasting is excluded.'" "By what law?" he asks. "By the law of works?" Then he answers, "Nay, but by the law of faith." "Now, sir, if we live by faith, we live without sin." "Aye," said he, pettishly, "I know the plaguy Methodists hold to perfection, but I wish they were all out of the world!" I said, "that would not alter the truth of this subject, nor hinder

you from committing sin; so, sir, you need not fret about that."

In 1808, April 6th, our conference was in Amenia. I was appointed to New Rochelle circuit again, and had brother ZALMAN LYON and brother CANFIELD, for my colleagues. I moved from Greensburg to New Rochelle, and prepared to attend the general conference, in Baltimore, May 6th, 1808. I had never attended a general conference before. I went in company with brother JOHN WILSON, the book-agent, and ten more of my brethren of the clergy. We had a pleasant journey by land and water stage. Our conference commenced with prayer. My soul was blessed—insomuch that I realized the presence of God among us, and that was the best of all. But we had great matters and little matters to deliberate upon. We wanted to alter our discipline for the better: some wanted the general conference to be made a delegated one: some wanted the Episcopacy made stronger by adding one or two more Bishops to the number we already had: and some wanted the bishop's administration assisted by something like a counsel of appointment, that they might aid him in stationing the preachers, and appointing presiding elders; but some were opposed to each and all these measures. Finally, a rule was proposed for making the general conference a delegated one. Some called this rule a constitution, and undoubtedly it was constituting a general conference a delegated one; but some thought it was a constitution of the Methodist Church. How-

ever, I never thought so, though I thought it was a constitution together in one, sure enough. But where there were *one hundred and thirty* preachers in the conference, it could not be expected that we could all think alike. This supposed constitution, however, did not give the Bishop any more power than he had before, in appointing presiding elders, and stationing the preachers; neither did it prevent a general conference from modifying the powers of a Bishop, in those matters which do not go to do away Episcopacy, or general superintendency; neither did it authorize the general conference to make Episcopacy a despotism.

We entertained different views, as to what would be the best method of supporting, strengthening, and perpetuating itinerancy. These were the three things we all drove at, and to promote which, all were zealous to do something. Whether we were zealous enough, or too zealous on this subject, I cannot say; at any rate we were very zealous.—I have thought if all the good that is done, is done through an itinerant ministry, our local ministry will be useless. This was not the prevailing opinion, and I don't know that it was the real opinion of any; but Episcopacy was thought by some to be the only thing to give energy to itinerancy, provided we could but give it power enough; and I thought so too, if we could make it almighty; but that was impossible. Episcopacy was variously defined; some said it was an office in the church that implied a power to preside over other offices. All this was very well, we needed a president in our conferences. But farther, it implies an

office to set apart and ordain men for other offices, that might be elected by the conference; this also is very well; it is a prudential means of preventing elders (who also possess power of ordination) from exercising it hastily, and laying hands too suddenly on men, for whom they may have a partiality.—But what has this to do with appointing presiding elders, and stationing the preachers, from year to year, without counsel and without the consent of the preacher, or even without his knowledge of the station he is to fill, until his fate is declared, at the close of the conference,—why nothing at all! However, a majority must rule, and a majority thought best to give our good Bishop this power, and therefore the minority must submit. But when they argue that this power belongs to the Bishop by Divine right, in consequence of his Episcopal office, I wish them to know that the Apostles of our Lord did not possess such a power, by virtue of *their* office, nor did any of the early fathers. I think this power is too great for any one man to possess, because he cannot safely use it. The Apostle Paul to the Corinthians, says, chapter xvi. 12, "As touching our brother Apostles, I GREATLY DESIRED *him* to come unto you with the brethren; but *his will was* not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time." So it seems the Apostles sometimes studied the conveniences of their brethren in the ministry, and did not exercise the power of appointment without the consent of those whom they appointed. They rather persuaded and counselled, and did not exercise an

arbitrary power. But a majority rules with us, and since the majority gives such unlimited power to our good Bishops, to station the preacher, they *must* do it; however disagreeable it is for them—they *must* do it. I have often felt sorry for them when they were about to read the list of appointments: how they must have felt, when they knew before they read it off, that some would be grieved. But I believe they strive to please all, and suit them as well as they can. And as they appoint presiding elders, and these are the Bishop's confidential men, and he obtains knowledge from them in a private way; therefore, some that think their appointments oppressive, have a little difficulty to suppress any jealousy that arises, either against the presiding elder, or the Bishop, or both; but they are all such good men, that we have got along hitherto with this system pretty well, and many have expressed their astonishment to me, how such a body of preachers, could submit to it! I have always replied, because we have the glory of God and his cause at heart, and seek not for ease, and worldly honor. And as long as we have men of these qualifications we shall prosper. The Lord will own us; such men, are men of God; but I fear we shall tempt the Lord our God, for though the Lord approves the motive that actuates us, yet our measures may not be wise, and by persisting in such measures, oppression may become legalized. And when this shall be the case, then sin layeth at our door. Individuals may sin, and the body not be answerable for it; but when the body or majority support one

or two men, in acts of oppression, the Bishops will not only be answerable for it, but the body too. Our Bishop, therefore, takes upon himself a responsibility that God does not require of him; and that Church that forces it upon him, tempts the Lord. God will not bless any thing and every thing. But while pure motives govern our actions, our ignorance of the best manner of doing things may be winked at. These are some of the reasons why I could not vote with the majority, to give our good Bishops the absolute power of appointment. Other matters relating to Episcopacy I am perfectly agreed in; but this I think is no part of the office; that is, we have no authority for it in the Bible. It must either be usurped, or be imposed upon him by the Church, over which he presides. He is not entitled to it by virtue of his ordination, according to my views of scriptural order.

Our General Conference waded through much business in a three weeks' session, in much good humor; and the best of all was, God was with us.

I came home before the conference arose, to superintend a camp meeting at Tuckahoe, and the preachers returned so as to join us in the camp meeting, after the first day. This meeting was attended with the blessing of God. Many were converted, and the children of God were much quickened. O how happy my soul has been in this work. Hundreds fell under the power of God. The Lord made bare his arm. The meeting was large; it was supposed from twelve to fifteen thousand were present. But this was not much over half as large as one at Croton, that

was supposed to consist of *twenty-four thousand*. Of our camp meetings, a stranger may at first think unfavorable; for on coming upon the ground, he first meets with groups of people around, suttlers and hucksters, wagons and tents, that crowd themselves into the roads and field, as near the camp ground as they can. These may be called the tents of Cush, the father of Nimrod, whose spirit and principles they embrace. The people that frequent those places are such as come to camp meeting to make a frolic of it. There is swearing, gambling, and the whole vocabulary of Bilingsgate language: so that on hearing this, and then coming into the meeting, he is ready to conclude it is a profanation of religious worship. But if he stays with us in camp, he will soon think otherwise. For the power of God is soon realized by all who have minds to discern between good and evil. Many are so wrought upon, that they are deprived of their strength and fall to the ground. Various opinions were formed respecting this work; some said "they were weak minds only who were wrought upon in this manner." To reason with some men of such opinions, seems to be lost labor; for they consider themselves possessed of strong minds and nerves. I left a camp meeting one time, and called to see one of this class of men, and he began to ask me about the meeting, when I told him, "that a number fell under the power of God." He asked, with a sarcastic tone, if it was not some weak women that fell? I said "yes, and weak men too." He then asked with apparent seriousness, "why it

was that those who fell were weak women? for," added he, "it seems there are more women profess religion than there are men! And what can be the reason?" "O," said I, "weak women know very well that they could not stand it in hell! they are too weak to stand hell-fire; but you strong men can stand it very well!" He blushed at this, and I thought it as good an argument as any for such men.

But it was generally known that the change wrought in those weak men and women, so called, made them very religious. And as they were known to lead pious lives afterwards, it was then thought to be a good means to reform weak minds. Such was the opinion of those who felt themselves above being religious in a humble manner.

We had many solemn and precious times on New Rochelle circuit. It appeared, however, to me, that Satan was let loose in some places; or rather Satan had let loose his servants to sell cakes, and beer, and rum, at our camp and quarterly meetings. At a quarterly meeting at White-Plains, in time of love-feast, on Sabbath morning, a number of hucksters paraded themselves in the road, to sell cakes, beer, and rum. I got the names of six, and made complaint to Esquire SNIFFEN, and he prosecuted and fined them. This made them angry with me. One of them swore, and talked big words, what he would do to me, and sent me word that he would *lick* me, as he expressed it. I sent word back by the messenger, "to have him clean his tongue before he under-

took to lick me, for I did not want to be defiled with his nasty tongue." I had to ride by his house to go to my appointment, and some of our friends advised me not to go that way, but I quoted Nehemiah, "Shall such a man as I flee to save his life?" No. So I passed his house as usual, but met with no disturbance; and before I got around the circuit, he was awakened and converted. I heard that he wanted to see me to make his confession; he said, "he wanted to see me more than any man living." So when we met, it was a very loving time—no violence offered. Religion makes a great change in the disposition. Our Gospel is a peaceful Gospel. Enemies are made friends. Many besides Saul of Tarsus have been convicted and converted, though they breathed threatening and slaughter against the people of God before.

At a quarterly meeting at Bedford, on the Sabbath, two young men in the gallery stood with their hats on, and laughed and made attempts to make others laugh, in time of prayer. I saw them, and they saw I was looking at them. But one of them continued to squint and make antic motions to excite a laugh from others. I looked steadily at him, but he was not to be deterred from laughing by my seeing him. Many others saw him also. So when the presiding elder had done prayer, I arose, and pointing to them, desired the two young men that stood with their hats on, to walk out of the meeting-house. They looked at me. I said, "I mean you two young men with

your hats on, who have been laughing in time of prayer. I wish you to walk out of the house. If any know their names, I wish them to inform me after meeting, who they are; I will teach those young men better than to disturb the solemnities of the worship of God, by such conduct." After meeting I was informed who they were, and Bro. HALL begged me not to prosecute them until he could see their parents. One was the son of a respectable Quaker, and the other of a respectable man that was of no profession, but a good neighbor to Bro. HALL. And as I was to preach at Bro. H——'s that Sabbath evening, he got the two young men there, and the father of the one of no profession. But the young Quaker's father lived a little farther off, and was not present. So Bro. HALL acted the part of a father for him. After preaching, I retired to my room. They brought the two young men into my room, to settle the difficulty. The father of the young man of no profession, expressed a sorrow that his son should disturb the meeting that day, as he was informed by Mr. HALL that he had done, and desired to settle it without a prosecution. I then spoke to the young man and asked him, "if he did not laugh in time of prayer?" He said, "yes." I asked, "if he did not think it was improper?" He said, "yes, and he was sorry for it." I asked him, "if he thought he should do so again?" He said, "he hoped not." I then turned to his father and said, "I am satisfied with the acknowledgments of

your son; it is all I want of him; I hope he will never misbehave again." This seemed to be quite affecting to many who had crowded into the room to see and hear how the difficulty would be settled. Then Bro. HALL, as a father for the young Quaker, came forward, and desired to have the difficulty settled with him, and expressed great satisfaction that the difficulty with the other was so well settled. I then turned to the young Quaker, and asked him, "if he did not laugh in the time of prayer?" He said, "yes, and others laughed too." "Did you understand me to mean you, when I desired you to leave the house?" He said, "yes." "And did you not know that it was improper to laugh in time of meeting as you did?" "No, it's no worse for me to laugh than others." "But," said I, "don't you think you have done wrong?" "Why, I believe," said he, "I did wrong in going to meeting; it would have been better for me to have been at work to get money to buy grog with!" I turned to the company and said, "well, I have reproved negroes and Indians and even dogs, and I never reproved a dog that was less conscious of his guilt, than this young man." Then turning to the young man, I said, "young man, I will bring you to repentance before I have done with you." There seemed to be a sudden transition in the company, from the meltings of joy to grief. But Bro. HALL, like a kind-hearted friend for his neighbor, went with me next morning on my way, as far as Mr. GREEN's, a Quaker elder, desiring me to call and see him and make a

complaint first to the elder, that if they would bring him to repentance, it was all I wanted. So we called on Mr. GREEN, and related all that had passed. He was grieved with the behaviour of the young Quaker, and acknowledged I was perfectly right, in insisting on a repentance in him. Mr. G—— desired to know how I would settle it, without a prosecution. I said, "if the young man will make confession of his wrong to the satisfaction of the Quaker-meeting, and to Bro. HALL, within twenty-one days from last Sabbath, and send me word in that time; and also will promise to attend my meetings at Bro. HALL's, and behave well for six months, I will not prosecute, otherwise I shall." Mr. G—— expressed entire satisfaction with the conditions. But I had stated also, as a part of good behaviour that he should not wear his hat in time of prayer, because it was contrary to the custom of Quakers in their own meetings: at other times he might. Mr. G——, and Bro. H——, engaged in the work, and brought him to repentance. So I had him for a constant hearer for six months, and he behaved well—thus ended the difficulty. This shows that people may be brought to repentance by the law, when the Gospel will not effect them. But law repentance don't convert the soul, though it keeps people from disturbing the worship of God; therefore it is better than no repentance. Many a poor fellow has gone to law for some trifling dispute about a few shillings, and has been brought to repentance before the lawyers have done with him. Some Quakers think I hate them, but they are grandly mistaken.

They judge as those do, who say, "if you love me, love my dog."

We had many soul-refreshing seasons on this circuit; my colleagues were happy in the work. We had about three hundred converted in the two years I travelled here; but there was not more than half that number to be reckoned as nett increase, because of the many that moved away. In these times it seems all will move to the Ohio; great talk about that country. I fear too much. I often related an anecdote of a farmer in England, who was about to sell and go to America. He rode up to London one day to close the bargain for his farm, and seeing a sign hanging on a sign-post, with a golden crow painted on the side fronting him, he stopped to view it, and read these words wrote under it. "A foreign country is like a golden crow." He was highly pleased with it, and concluded it was a high recommendation of America. He moved on to see the other side of the sign, and found it all painted black; he saw wrote under the black paint: "*But when you get there, it is as black as it is here.*"—This caused a demur in the English farmer. If America were as black as England, he might as well stay where he was; so he turned home again, and related to his family and friends the story of his adventure. But this anecdote, I fear, never hindered one from emigrating to the western countries. We must have a large increase, to keep our numbers good in this part of the work, while the western conferences have a great increase.

CHAPTER XIV.

After the conference in May, 1809, I went to Reading circuit. Now again I was in New England. Law established religion is an abomination in my eyes; well, I must bear it. The erroneous doctrines of Calvinism could not long have such a pernicious influence to delude souls, were it not for the partial restraints laid upon our liberties of speech by the laws of New England. By Calvinistic doctrines, I do not mean that all the doctrines Calvinistic ministers preach are erroneous. No; they preach many precious truths, and are many of them very pious, holy men. But the doctrines emphatically called Calvinism, are those included in the five points, differring from Luther and Arminius. In other doctrines we agree. But first, unconditional election, including the idea, God decreed whatsoever comes to pass. Second, unconditional perseverance. Third, partial redemption, or that Christ did not die for all. Fourth, irresistible grace. Fifth, imperfection. These are the doctrines of the Calvinists of the present day. Whereas, we hold and teach the reverse of this. We say, first, election is conditional, and that God did not decree whatsoever comes to pass.

Second, a Christian can fall from grace, and the promise of his salvation is on the condition of his perseverance unto the end of his probationary state. Third, Christ did die for all. Fourth, grace is often and may be at all times resisted. Fifth, it is our privilege and duty to be made perfect in love in this life. But these doctrines were opposed as highly erroneous by the Calvinists, especially in New England.

Now I was on the ground again. But union was the song. Ah! union! thou sweetest daughter of peace: how beautiful and pleasant art thou in the land of steady habits. Thy garments look beautiful, but they smell not of the perfumes made to embalm. Thou hast a golden girdle, but Saul's javelin may be concealed under thy cloak.

I came to Reading, and heard of the counsel the good doctor of divinity, in Yale College, had given in the association in Connecticut—to preach as near like the Methodists as they could, and not preach their own doctrines in their own towns; but to change with a minister of another town, to preach doctrines. This made me think of the privateers in time of war; when they see a strange vessel they hoist a different flag from their own, either to decoy the enemy into their hands, or to defend themselves the better. But this policy will not do for Christian warfare. Those who pass counterfeit money, often carry good money with them to show, while their design is to pass off their counterfeit, when they can do it without detection. But this policy will not do for Christians.

I have known persons when they had counterfeit money passed upon them, and they knew not that it was counterfeit at the time, who felt themselves rich, and well able to make a large purchase; but when they came into market, and found their money would not pass, they felt very much vexed, either with those who refused their money, or with those who passed it upon them. So it is with those who are deceived in matters of religion.

I feel sorry for those who make such pitiful shifts to get along with their mistaken notions about religion. They discover their own weakness, and betray a fear openly to avow their doctrines. The Saybrook Platform, which contains their articles of faith, has been almost hid for more than fifty years. This book of discipline, was printed in the year 1710: it contains the effusions of good, honest Calvinists, mistaken as they were, yet like honest men they professed what they believed. But this book is scarcely known among the people now. If I quote the articles contained in it, as the doctrines believed by the Congregationalists in New-England, they deny it, and say I accuse them wrongfully.—Then I come to the Westminster Confession, or Catechism; that also they deny. Then if I ask them what do you hold to? They say the Bible; so do I; then we believe alike, that Christ died for all, salvation is free, whosoever will, may come. But they don't like this neither. They cannot believe with me, in a possibility of falling from grace or perfection. How then can we unite? They are mani-

festly uneasy, in hearing my doctrine. But I hope to see the day, when those doctrines will be understood, and have their due influence on the human mind.

Brother Isaac Candy was my colleague the three first quarters of this year. We had a good revival of religion in different places. In Reading, Green's-Farms, Weston, Bridgeport, Stratford, New-Town, Danbury, Ridgefield, Wilton, Norwalk, and some other places. The nett increase was over *one hundred and fifty*, but I presume that more than three hundred experienced religion. Many joined other denominations. So that it was a time of ingathering of souls.

In Danbury, the few friends we had there, commenced building a meeting-house; they had succeeded so far, as to raise a frame, but when that was done, their funds were all expended. There stood the frame of a meeting-house. Some began to laugh and say, "the Methodists began to build, and are not able to finish." Dr. Starr informed me of this affair, when I came to the place, and desired me to beg on the circuit, for help to finish the house. I had been around the circuit once, and I thought it impossible to raise money enough for this work from the members on this circuit. We concluded it would take at least two hundred dollars in cash, besides what was subscribed in materials. I made it a matter of prayer to God, that night, and got an answer that I should succeed some way or other. So the next morning, I said to the Doctor, I will engage

to raise you two hundred dollars. When my rest-days come, in which I could visit my family, in New Rochelle, I took a circuitous route through part of Croton and New Rochelle circuits, and begged for the Danbury meeting-house. So that when I came to see the Doctor again, I was able to pay him more than eighty dollars, of what I had promised him. Upon this, the Doctor began to proceed to finish the house. The people were surprised, supposing he was about to do it at his own expense, and it might injure him. He was not then a member of society. But he informed them that the Methodists loved one another, and that they had sent him money, so that if he could get work subscribed, he should have money enough, with prudent measures, to finish it. This had a good effect. One or two merchants gave some glass, another some nails; mechanics turned out from one to five or six days a-piece, and when I came around, I brought eighty dollars more. In all this, I had got but little from the circuit. Then I began to solicit donations on the circuit, and succeeded in making up about two hundred and thirty dollars in all. The house was enclosed in good order, and the manner of our doing it, had a good effect on the minds of good people generally, and raised the character of Methodism in that place. Much credit is due to Dr. Starr for this good work.

Our societies had been instructed by my predecessors to make their collections for the support of the preachers in the classes. But the collections fell short of a supply, and of course I was deficient, for

I still kept up my rule of paying my colleagues and presiding elder. Some of our friends thought if we had our collections in public, we should get more. I thought otherwise, and would not alter the custom that my predecessors had labored to establish. But they prevailed on my colleague to notify a collection in public, to be taken up when I came around, assuring him that they would get more. So after I had preached, the leader informed the people, that there was a collection to be taken up for the support of the Gospel. I supposed the members would make out theirs in class, as usual. So when he counted the money, while the people were going out, I perceived he had got almost half as much as the class used to give. I thought, surely we have missed it in not having public collections before. But when I had met the class, I said, "now brethren, you can make out your collection," and to my astonishment, they had all contributed in the public collection. Then I called upon the class leader to count the money before them. They were abashed when they saw there was not quite half as much as they used to make out in their class. I said, "brethren, do you think to cheat the Lord? It appears that you have given less, presuming that the congregation would make up your lack! You said, "if we would have public collections here, we should get more money? Instead of that, we have got less! Here, take your money! I will not carry it to the stewards unless it is as large as formerly!" I thought this reproof mild enough and severe enough, too. Upon their examination of the collection, they found twenty cents was all that was given, besides what the members gave.

At my next appointment I dismissed the congregation, and they were going out, when a rich old man that only used to give one dollar per quarter, spoke, and said, "there is to be a public collection." I said, "no, we will have the collection in the class." So after class, I said, as usual, "now, brethren, you can make out your collection." The good old brother spoke and said, "we ought to have had the collection in public." I said "have you brought your dollar?" He said, "no, I have only half a dollar." "Then I have detected you this time," said I. "But did you think to cheat the Lord out of half of the offering?"—O how I felt.—"Now," said I, "I am convinced that the people in Connecticut are a stingy, deceitful people. Your wisest men have given you this character; they knew that you would never support public institutions unless you were compelled to do it. Therefore they have made laws to force you to support the Gospel, and to build meeting-houses, and school-houses; but you are so stingy that you would not do it unless by compulsion. How can you answer this to God? It is not me that you are cheating, but you are robbing God of offerings which are his due. We Methodist preachers come to you in the name of the Lord—we have not stipulated with you for a certain *salary*. We have said in our discipline, what a preacher should have, and it is well known

that that sum is only sufficient to supply the bare necessaries of life, as times are. We are not supplied with the conveniences of life, much less the superfluities. Every one knows that our allowance is too small, and we do not even raise this by taxation or coercive measures, because we trust in the Lord. We believe that God has called us to this work, and he will see us paid in such manner as shall be best for us, and most for his glory. The Gospel ordains a support for its ministers, and that support must arise from the liberality of the members, not by constraint, but of a liberal mind. You have heard of some that had their last and only cow sold at vendue, to raise money to pay the minister's tax. You say this is hard and cruel; but the law demands it. And what of all this? It is but a human law. The law of God demands that you should be liberal, and while he is prospering you, and giving you the means to contribute, if you do not do it, he will damn your eternally, and that will be worse for you than to have your cow sold to pay the minister's tax. God will not be trifled with in this manner. It is not your money that I am seeking, but it is you. I want you saved from sin and stinginess. You must be loving and kind; and if you don't love your preachers who are laboring night and day, for your good, whom will you love? I hope I may never have occasion to speak so severely again. It hurts me; but I must tell you, that if you trifle thus with God, you will surely be damned! I hope you that are guilty will reform, and I pray the Lord to forgive you this sin.

I had none to oppose me or reply; for as it was well known that I was the only preacher that was deficient, and their professed design in having a public collection, was to raise more money, and those best able to contribute were keeping back a part of the price, therefore, they could say nothing; and those who were not guilty, did not want to say any thing, but appeared pleased with my severe lecture. I hope this lecture will be a means of saving many souls, not only in New England, but where ever a *stingy* spirit rules. A man that is *stingy* is more or less deceitful; and like Achan, coverts what belongs to God. A miserable idolater!

From this time I began to preach more especially against stinginess. I must think the Legislators of New-England judge of the people as men, and as wise men generally judge. But it is a reflection upon the religious character of this people, to suppose that with their great profession of religion, they would not support the Gospel, but by the compulsive power of taxation. The exercise of liberal principles are superseded where coercive measures are used to support the ministry. Toleration is not a religious principle, but a usurpation of power that is blasphemous in its nature. If the Governor and several Doctors of Divinity, were to present a bill to the Legislature, entitled an act to grant liberty to the Almighty to receive the worship of the Methodists and Quakers, every one would startle and call it blasphemy; but toleration implies this. Thus our forefathers, at Boston, would not suffer the Almighty

to receive the worship of the Quakers in Boston; for it is certain the Almighty could not receive their worship in Boston, after they were hanged. Each individual stands accountable to God for himself. The Legislature cannot answer for me, or any one else. Therefore, laws respecting religious worship are unrighteous, any further than they secure the liberties of religious people, in what they view to be their duty to God, while they do not disturb others in their religious devotions. If a man will not worship God, or pay freely to the support of religious worship, he must answer it to God for himself. If a man choose sin and death, when he might choose the fear of the Lord and life, it is not in the power of a Legislature, or even of ministers that could work miracles, to prevent him, and in attempting to do it, they might be a means of destroying others. Therefore my best plan is, to keep on my way as I have been instructed. I don't preach for the sake of the money I get, yet I need more than I get. But I look to the Lord whom I serve. I believe this Gospel will support itself, and though I suffer a little, if the principle which I am defending can obtain, true religion will be more acceptable, in the view of thousands who now see religion as through a glass darkly. In order to discharge my duty in the ministry, I must preach against the erroneous principles of this government; and the stingy, lazy, covetous, deceitful disposition too much prevailing in the Methodists' societies. It is said in these parts, that many of those who join the Methodists, do so only

to get clear of paying taxes, and I fear this is but too true: yet I say, if the Methodists take the scum of the towns in New-England, to make a church of, and they become liberal and pious, and truly religious, it will be an high recommendation to the spirit we profess, and the principles we teach.

At the conference in the year 1810, I received my station on Courtlandt circuit. This circuit was made out of a division of Croton and New-Rochelle circuits. The work of the Lord had been so great and glorious that more laborers were required, so this circuit was both new and old. Here the people had got an idea that I was very rich, of course many thought they need not contribute to assist me. It seems an impostor came along through this circuit among the Methodists, and wanted to get entertainment for nothing, so he informed the people, that he had been to see me; and that his father had been judge of the court, and was very rich, but had lately deceased, and left in his will a legacy to me, consisting of a farm and eleven hundred dollars in money, because I was the means of his conversion some years before; and now, said he, "I have been down to carry brother HIBBARD (as he called me) the deed of the farm, and to have him come up to Sharon to take possession of it." This story pleased my friends very much, so they entertained him in the best manner freely; but I never knew his father nor him. However, he knew that I was very much beloved where I was acquainted; so he contrived this story to enable him to travel at my ex-

pense, and a great expense it was to me in the end. Frequent reports that I was dead, were circulated this year. It was reported at five different times, that I had hung myself. Twice I made inquiry with regard to the source of these reports, and each time traced it to a Quaker family, who said, "they had heard it *some where*, but could not tell where." So I think the report originated with them, and there I let it end. I thought if the Quakers wish to take revenge on me for making a statement of their errors, this is a sly way to do it. But I shall live to disappoint them, without taking any farther notice of this matter. And it will be with them as it was with a fool I heard of: the fool got angry with Providence, and spit up towards the heavens, and the spittle fell in his own face.

As I was riding to New York in the fall of this year, and crossing the bridge at Harlaem, I passed my old friend B—— from Rye; I checked my horse to have him come along side of me. I looked around to see if he would come up, and I saw him reining his horse out one side of the road. He looked pale. I said, "come, let us ride in company." His chin quivered, and his voice faltered. He spoke, and said, "a–i–, a–i–, is it you?" I said, "yes, it is I myself." "A–i–, is it possible," said he, as he rode up along side of me, "is it possible, that it is you?" I asked, "Why all this amazement?" "Why," said he, "we heard that you was dead, and that you had hung yourself d it came so correct, that all our neighbors believed it." "Why," said he, "we

had a great time of mourning there, on your account, and one Baptist neighbor wept when he heard it, and said, "if this is true, I shall believe in the possibility of falling from grace." I said, "well I have not hung myself; and you may tell that Baptist brother, he need not wait for that event, before he believes in the possibility of falling from grace." "But who brought the news?" He said, "it came from the Quaker-meeting; some of the neighbors had been there, and had heard it mentioned by some one at the meeting." I said "well, the Quakers cannot get me hung yet; I suppose it to be some of the little-souled Quakers that raise these reports."

In Pawlings-Town we preached on the Sabbath to a large congregation, with a prospect of great good through my instrumentality. On the Monday before my appointment there, a traveller, (nobody knew who) called at the door of a tavern in that place, and informed the family, "that he was desired by somebody about twenty miles below, to call there and inform them that the Rev. Billy Hibbard was dead, that he died near Croton, of a typhus fever, very suddenly, and as his appointment was to preach there the next Sabbath, they thought it would be a kindness to inform them of it, so they might not be disappointed." This news was thought by many to be true. It seems I had died a natural death this time. But some doubted the truth of it, because it had been reported that I had hung myself so many

times before. However, I came to New-Fairfield, (bro. MEAD's,) on Thursday, and it seems they had heard the news of my death, and believed it. So when I came to the gate, a little boy ran into the house, and soon came out again, so that he met me in the yard. Just then I heard the shriek of a woman; and as I entered the door, I saw sister MEAD had fallen into a chair, and appeared to be in a fit. I hurried to support her. REBECCA stood at the wheel, looked pale, and affrighted. I asked REBECCA what was the matter? None spoke a word! I asked again—but no answer. The little boy by this time came in with my saddle; I asked him, "what is the matter?" He smiled and said, "I suppose she will tell you," and went out. I could not discover by her looks, or pulse, any particular disease. But why is REBECCA so frightened? thought I, she must think her mother is dying. I asked her again "what is the matter with your mother?" She then spoke, and said, "I suppose she will tell you." This surprised me more, but perceiving she was not in a fit, and that she was sighing and catching her breath, as though she would speak if she could, I shook her a little and raised her up, and spoke earnestly, "tell me what is the matter?" She spoke as well as she could, "Why, d-o-n't you k-n-o-w t-h-a-t we heard you was d-e-a-d?" "Well," said I, "I'm not dead, and if I was, I would not appear to frighten or hurt you." "O," said she, "I am not frightened, but when the boy said you had come, and we had heard so correctly that you were

dead, I felt shocked that any person should lie so much about you. Last night we heard of it at our prayer-meeting, and the circumstance of a traveller calling at the tavern with the message, and to prevent a disappointment, my husband notified the people that you would not be here, and now to have this sudden shock, made me almost faint."

To rectify all mistakes, I had to ride on to Pawlings-Town to let them know I was still alive. I preached on this text, "If they believe not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one arose from the dead."

We had a good work of the Lord on the circuit. Our camp-meeting at Pawlings-Town was attended with the usual blessing of God, but no extraordinary increase. Many moved away, so that we about kept our number good. My mind enjoyed peace, though my family was sick a part of this year. This gave me some uneasiness; but the neighbors were kind in New Rochelle, and Dr. ROGERS was very kind to attend them in my absence, and even while I was at home. But through the mercy of the Lord we lost none.

At the conference in New-York, 1811, I received my station on Rhinebeck circuit. Here I had lived and travelled before. Brother DUNBAR was my colleague, brother CANDY, supernumerary. It was a heavy tax upon me to provide for two preachers. So the first quarterly-meeting the presiding elder and stewards, put their heads together to make me alter my method of paying my colleagues, before I

took any thing for myself. They stated their opinion of justice in this matter, and the stewards being *put up to it* by the presiding elder; one said, "it was his duty to divide the money to each according to their claims, and he would do so." I said, "I will not contend about it, for it is written, 'an elder should not *strive*.' But," said I, "I shall not take any of your money until the preachers are all paid off." "Well," said the steward, "I will send it to your wife." "Ah!" said I, "she will not take it, for we are agreed in this thing." "Well, then," said he, "I will send it to the conference." I said, "that you can do, but I shall not receive it from the conference. I make no claim there, though I have every year been nearly *one hundred* dollars deficient, and sometimes more than a hundred, but I have made no claims on the conference. You can do as you please this quarter, but as the discipline makes it my duty to appoint stewards and change them, I shall appoint new ones for the next quarterly meeting. I must have stewards that will mind me." Upon this, they gave it up, though the senior steward said, "he would be glad to have me release him from the task." I said, "I have nothing against you, if you will mind me; but if you will not, I must appoint one that will. I am the only person that stands responsible for the disbursement of monies that come into the steward's hands." So they paid off the preachers, though they had said, "there would not be enough to pay my colleagues, and that I should get nothing this quarter," yet they were mistaken, for I got

EIGHT CENTS!! I was happy with my *eight cents!* "Blessed are the poor." My soul was happy in God.

The two years I was on this circuit was a season of great mortality. The spotted fever raged; hundreds died suddenly! Physicians seemed not to know how to prevent the evil at first; some thought bleeding was the best remedy; but nearly all died who were bled in the first stage of the disease.—Others thought stimulating remedies were best, but this would not cure over two in five. I perceived, that on approach of this complaint, the person was seized with langour, dejection of spirits, amazing depression, and loss of muscular strength, universal weariness and soreness, pains in the head, back, and extremities, the pulse small and hard. I advised to vomit freely, and physic with julap and calomel, and then promote perspiration by giving a solution of tartarized antimony, with teas of wild hyssop or hemlock boughs. This method I found succeeded in more than *one hundred* cases—so that not one died. Some supposed my patients were not attacked with the spotted fever, because they recovered so soon. But several doctors fell in with this mode of practice, and found it successful. Some physicians would not receive instruction, the bleeding system was their hobby. Three doctors died martyrs to their system of practice, and I thought some lives were saved by their deaths, for others forthwith altered their mode of practice. The pestilence was severe. I was called frequently to preach funeral discourses. In one house three lay dead, and four sick with the fever.

two of whom died within two or three days after. Though death raged among us, it seems but few got religion. However, we had peace on the circuit, and some increase during these two years.

Our General Conference was held in New York, May, 1812. Here again we had to wade through much business, a variety of opinions were agitated about Episcopacy. I have often smiled to think that some of us view Episcopacy a thing so great and important, that we hardly know how important it is, when we even made it ourselves. If we give it power enough, I presume it will be so important that we cannot govern it; and if it can govern itself, it will be a great mercy to the Methodists.

Our Annual Conference commenced in Albany, June 4th, 1812. My kinsman and dear brother Robert Hibbard, was desired to go to Canada—he came to me for advice. There was expectation of a war between America and Great Britain. He asked me "if I thought there would be war?" I said, "yes, our government must declare war, or we shall lose our independence." "Well, in that case would you advise me to go to Canada?" I asked him, "whether he could, in conscience, take the oath that would be required?" He said "yes." "And are you sufficiently assured that you have friends there, that would support you?" He said, "yes." I said, "then go, and be true to the government. Your business is to preach the Gospel, and save souls by the means God hath appointed. If we are enemies in a political point of view, remember our great work

is to preach the Gospel. I shall be true to this government, and you must be true to that; but above all let us be faithful to serve the Lord." Upon this we parted. But alas! before the year was out he was drowned in the river St. Lawrence! It seems, in crossing, his horse pawed, and stove a hole in the boat, so that it filled; the horse then jumped overboard, and he held on to his horse; they swam toward the shore, but he was soon disengaged from the horse, and sunk to rise no more! This was the end of a very holy man. I trust he is numbered with the just men made perfect.

CHAPTER XV.

At our next Conference, held in Amenia, 1813, I was stationed on Pittsfield circuit.

Here were troubles. A number of members in society at the west end of Pittsfield, had withdrawn and held separate meeting; public opinion was in their favor. And nearly all that expressed an opinion to me, expressed a fear that they had been treated unjustly, and were a persecuted people. Their committee waited upon me, and stated the desire and request of the whole body of dissenters, viz., that I should form them into a class according to the Discipline of the Methodist Church. I agreed to it if they would conform to the said Discipline, and receive me as their minister; they agreed to this. So I took them in on trial or probation, and at the end of their six months' probation, I stated to them that though I viewed their motives in withdrawing from the church to be pure, yet I considered the act wrong, and this error had risen from a mistaken notion of conducting class matters. I required of them a confession, that their act of withdrawing was wrong. This they all refused to do, but four or five, so the few that confessed, we took into membership again. But the

others went off very much displeased with me, because I required of them a confession. I found they would neither receive me, nor the discipline to govern them, unless we could govern according to their opinion. But my sufferings and labor with them, were so well understood, that it changed public opinion respecting them, and their congregation left them; this vexed them, and they accused me heavily. They said, "you meant to break us up," I said, "yes, that is true, and I am sorry I did not succeed to make you all good Methodists."

These schismatics formed a coalition with others on different circuits, and made zealous struggles to establish themselves into a church under the name of *Reformed Methodists*. But wisdom was not "justified of her children" among them, therefore, they have not prospered. Confusion was in their counsels, and in many places they dwindled away, professing themselves to be spiritually wise, when they were not; they became bold in their boisterous preaching, and having the name of Methodists, they were in good repute for awhile. But some have since joined the Shakers, and some the Christ-ians, so that now their number is small.

At our next Annual Conference held in New-York, 1814, I gave intimation that I felt it my duty to volunteer my service to supply the army with preaching, in all cases where I could, and that if the militia should be called out where I travelled, and wanted a chaplain, I should offer myself to go with them. This

matter was talked over, and it was thought to be right to aid the government, and especially to do all in our power to prevent wickedness increasing because of the war. Our prayers were fervent, that God would dispose our enemies to be at peace with us. Our government had offered peace offerings in the commencement, by sending out its ministers to treat for peace, and submitting to have the Emperor of Russia, to mediate between the two belligerant nations; but England thought to "try the tug of war" awhile, and refused the friendly offer of Russia to mediate. Therefore, war raged, and many battles were fought, from the time war was declared on June 18, 1812, to January 8, 1815; when the ever memorable battle at New-Orleans, taught the British, that invading armies could not stand before American rifleman with our heroic JACKSON to direct their course; and the God of Heaven to aid the little band, with skill and force.

I was informed that the Methodists from Kentucky and Tennessee, frequently held prayer-meetings in their tents; and one day when general orders were issued, not to have any unusual noise in the camp, these Christian riflemen had prayers, and feeling pretty happy, they made some noise, at which an officer went to General JACKSON, and asked him if he should stop them, as the General's orders were that there should be no unusual noise in the camp. The General answered, "No, let them pray; God forbid that the sound of prayer should be accounted an unusual noise, where I command."

War is one of the four sore evils that God brings

upon nations; pestilence, plague, and famine are the other three. And it is national wickedness which God designs to reform by sending those evils. The pestilence had long raged in our land, and the national wickedness was not reformed by us. I viewed the sins of our nation, to be the sins of its rulers; and I viewed the rulers of this nation, to be the *people*. As to our President and members of Congress, they are but the servants of the people. And one part of the wickedness of the people, who are the sovereign rulers, consisted in speaking evil of their servants. This sin had so completely infested and infected every part of the community, that scarcely any were free from blame. Whether federalists or republicans were appointed to office, they were sure to be abused and spoken evil of. It might be expected that the ministers of religion would suppress evil speaking, by their united testimony against it. But alas! though some discharged their duty faithfully, yet many fomented evil speaking. In New-England the clergy of the established order, were generally opposed to a republican administration of government; and some of them were vehement in their declamations against the President and General Council of the nation. Some Doctors of Divinity and eminent ministers, became notorious for their oratorical fulminations. One sermon on a fast day, in 1814, from which my friend PHILOM gives some extracts, is sufficient to show that the preacher as well as many others, seemed to enlist their whole souls in the cause of public slander, and oratorical declama-

tion. What then could be expected of the few who seldom or never spoke of the politics of the day in their sermons, to counteract this evil? Therefore, the sin of evil-speaking came upon us, like a wide breaking in of waters.

At length Dr. M'Cleod, of New York, preached five sermons on the subject of the measures of government, with the design of showing that our war was just. These sermons did much good, though they seemed to have come out at the eleventh hour; yet they did much good, and they ought to be read by all; I was much edified by them; they contain unanswerable proof of the right and duty of a nation, under certain circumstances, to wage war; and that our nation was then suffering more than a sufficiency to justify them in their declaration of war, yet many hot-headed partisans roundly declared the war was unjust. This opposition was very unpleasant, arising out of ignorance and party zeal. The clergy in New England carried great influence, and were united in their efforts. They had prophecied many things against the administration, the most of which proved to be false; but we had good ground to fear that their influence among superstitious mortals in exciting opposition, would end in rebellion. These were times that tried men's souls. It was important that every man that was friendly to the general government, should show himself and avow his principles. I did not hesitate a moment; therefore, when the militia were called out to go to Boston, I volunteered my services, and Col. Chamberlain appointed me chaplain of his regiment. All was hurry. Orders were given to march to Boston forthwith. Gov. Strong had been requested by the President to call out the number of troops assigned by Congress, as the quota for the state of Massachusetts, in order to defend Boston from an attack that was threatened, by a fleet and army of twenty thousand men, under the command of Lord Hill. But Gov. Strong knowing that if he called out those troops by the order from Congress, the chief command of them would devolve on Gen. Dearborn, who commanded the regular troops at Boston, at that time; therefore he called them out by his own order, that he might keep the command of them in his own hands. I saw by this disobedience of Gov. Strong that there might be a secret design against the general government. I believed that if Lord Hill should come, Gov. Strong might join him, and so separate New England from the other states, and make himself a *king* in the land of steady habits. As soon as I had an opportunity, I opened my mind to the officers of the staff, and some of them were of my opinion. The Colonel declared, that the moment he discovered that the Governor did not defend the place, in case we should be attacked, he would command his regiment to turn their arms upon him. Our men were in high spirits. I had been ordered to join the regiment on the third day's march. By this time I was prepared for the campaign; and the day I started I heard the news of the defeat of the British at Plattsburgh and Baltimore. So when I overtook the regiment in

Ware, and informed them of the news, the officers immediately informed the soldiers, and they gave six cheers that rent the air.

When we arrived at Boston, we were ordered to encamp at Cambridgeport, until further orders. This was a wet, sunken place, calculated to give our men remittent fevers. However, our good surgeon, Dr. BURBANK, succeeded in curing all that were attacked with it, so that we lost none. Our regiment was called out every morning at nine o'clock, to attend prayers, and we had many solemn seasons. I generally prayed about six or eight minutes, and would sometimes exhort them about ten minutes more. Sometimes many were in tears while I was pressing home the duty of the soldier to fear God and serve his country in the midst of war. I prayed also for our enemies, that God would dispose them to be at peace with us, and that he would perpetuate those just principles upon which our independence and government as a nation were founded, and would inspire us to act up to the dignity of free men; and thereby teach our enemies that God had given us our independence, and that our righteous laws and civil powers were ordained of God. I prayed that we might be blessed with a realizing sense of our privilege, under this free and mild government, and that God would forgive our enemies the evils they had done us, in robbing us of our sailors, and infringing upon our rights on the high seas. I believe my prayers were heard in heaven, for we had an answer that solemnized our minds. Our soldiers generally manifested a desire to attend prayers, and also to attend my meetings on week-day evenings. Thus we were employed, drilling by day, and attending meetings in the evening two or three times in a week. All our meetings were solemn assemblies. We were sometimes so crowded, that none could sit down; all stood in perfect silence to hear what I had to say. My practice was, to sing a hymn, make a short prayer, and then exhort them to duty. "*To do violence to no man: accuse none wrongfully, and to be content with their wages*," formed the foundation of my discourses, endeavoring thereby to cultivate a quiet, loving disposition among officers and soldiers. I said, we must discharge our duty as soldiers that fear God, and in all things act with a special reference to the glory of God, in defending the principles of justice, and the equal rights of man; which God has ordained as the grand pillars of the independence and government of these United States. We ought not to suffer the haughty tyrants of Europe to break faith with us with impunity. But we must look to God to aid us, as he aided our fathers in the revolution. Our government is of God. The powers that be, are ordained by him. If we resist her just commands, we shall be cursed of God. We can live according to the dictates of religion and serve our God and country. Let there be no profane swearing, no passions indulged that would violate the decorum of christian soldiers, but show to all that we fear God and honor our government. After some such short discourse, I would close by prayer.

Some have expressed an opinion that it was needless to have chaplains in an army; but from what I have witnessed, I think if ministers can do good any where, they can in the army, if they are men fearing God themselves. There they have labor enough to prevent swearing, and many immoral habits that prevail.

I believe I was instrumental of some good to the officers and soldiers. We had a very good understanding with each other, and contracted such an affection, that when we were discharged and were taking leave of each other, our affections were manifested in a liberal flow of tears. And not long after I returned home, I had the satisfaction to hear of forty-three who were in our regiment, that had experienced religion, and joined our society. I met with no abuse from either soldiers or sailors while with them. But such was the habit of speaking evil of the President and Congress, that I met with several insults from *gentlemen* of those habits.—One instance of insult happened on parade. A gentleman that often attended prayers outside of the hollow square, came to me while I was waiting for the regiment to form; and the invalids were also standing with me. This gentleman came to make some acquaintance; he asked for my name, and whether I was educated in Cambridge College, &c. He remarked that our country was once flourishing, but now it is wretched, "and all," said he, "by our damned rulers." I said, "sir, our rulers are not damned." "Yes," said he, "they are damned rulers."

I said, "sir, you insult me, no man that is acquainted with me, will treat me with vulgarity, nor curse the rulers of our land in my presence; it is written thou shalt not curse the rulers of thy people." He said, "if I have hurt your feelings, I am sorry for it, I meant MADISON." I said, "I feel myself insulted by you, and I owe you no conversation." He steered off without another word. At a proper time I made my complaint to the officers of the staff. I told them, I could not hear the rulers of our land cursed without resenting it. There was such an interest taken in my behalf by the officers and soldiers, that soon it was noised about that the chaplain had been insulted, and it became the subject of much conversation. Some concluded by way of apology, that the gentleman would not have made so free in my presence if he had not supposed that I was a chaplain of the same political sentiments of the clergy in general in New England. I said, if so, what an account will those clergymen have to give, who have encouraged the people in cursing the rulers of our land; verily, this has been the cause of this war, and of all the blood that has been shed. *O tempora! O mores!*

It was soon known that I was a republican; though we agreed among the officers of our regiment, to say nothing about party politics, but all professed to be true Americans. Yet I heard much said among the inhabitants of towns around, and many things said, that I had to reprove. It surprised and grieved me to hear people who professed so much religion,

speak evil of those rulers, who are but the servants of the people.

It was this year, 1814, that Governor STRONG and the assembly, gave the tone of rebellion against the general government, by recommending and appointing delegates for the Hartford convention. This was a mad affair, instigated in a great measure by the clergy of New England, who like Dr. PARISH, vented their invectives against the administration of government, and fomented division. It was so generally known that the clergy were opposed to our government, that it surprised many, when they learned that I was a friend to the administration. Therefore I was unto them as a spy; some went so far as to say, that I ought not to be a chaplain. But our regiment were all of one mind; whether they were federal or republican, they were for defending the country like true Americans. And I heard no complaining from one of them. But some members of the assembly and some hot-headed politicians who were deceived with false prophecies, spoke against every thing that was of a republican character. The prophets of the day (such as they were) prophecied that great Britain would never make peace with America while Mr. MADISON was President. Therefore, one zealous convert of those false prophets, presented a motion to the assembly in Boston, to appoint a delegation from that assembly to wait on the President, and request him to resign his office, or change his cabinet counsel, &c._ But in their profound wisdom they thought it best first to have a convention of

wise men to meet at Hartford. And when this was known through the state, the clergy proclaimed a fast; and on the 14th of December, 1814, their convention met at Hartford, and the clergy called together their flocks to fast and pray for them; so they fasted and prayed, and formed moral societies to keep the Sabbath. But the secret design of these moral societies was to prevent the government teams from travelling on the Sabbath. Therefore, many broke the Sabbath, in laboring to make other people keep it.

Such was the opposition of the federalists in New England, to the war, that many of them thought it a pious duty to speak evil of the Congress, and complain of every measure proposed to prosecute the war with success. They rejoiced at our discomfitures, and seemed to mourn on hearing news of our success. The prayers for our government offered up by many of them, were studied invectives. And on all occasions, they seemed to pride themselves in showing a dislike to every measure pursued by the Americans; and of extolling the magnanimity of the English. Though this grieved me, yet I pitied them as deluded souls, and felt truly sorry for them. But I was pleased with the rebut some met with in their impious complaining. One day a number of gentlemen from Boston, went on board the Independence seventy-four gun ship that was fitting out for sea, in Charlestown harbor; among them was one of the Hartford convention gentlemen. The sailors had just killed and dressed a fat hog, and this pious con-

vention gentleman was strutting about, not observing the dead hog, and when his full bosom was ready to burst with some pious slang against the measures of war; he at last sung out, "Fye fo fum, I smell the blood of an English mun." And was about to add, dead or alive I'll have some; but turning around as he spoke, he saw the dead hog hanging near him, which had affected his olfactory nerve, and inspired his pious stomach, so that he cut short his remarks, on finding he had mistaken the blood of a hog for an Englishman.

Col. CHAMBERLAIN had sent word to the Governor, that his regiment was ready for service, or to march down to Castine, to drive off the British. I was requested also to inform those members of the assembly, then setting in Boston, who came from that part of the Maine, where the British troops lay, that our regiment were waiting for orders to march down and drive them off. And they petitioned Governor STRONG for a suitable force of volunteers for that purpose. But our pious Governor loved our enemies so well, that he would not have them hurt or disturbed; so he advised neutrality, and preached peace, with all but republicanism. I did not hear of his preaching any peace with that.

These were times to try men's souls, but God overruled, and though they organized a convention to meet at Hartford, and the clergy with their flocks fasted and prayed, yet, "*He that sitteth in heaven, had them in derision,*" Psalms ii. 4. Notwithstanding the opposition and prophecies that Englan

would not make peace with America, while Mr. MADISON was President, so it was. In spite of the false prophets, a peace was concluded upon by the commissioners at Ghent, and signed by the Prince Regent, on the 24th of December, while the Hartford Convention were plotting mischief; and it arrived here the forepart of February, and was ratified by President MADISON, on the fifteenth of the same month. While the delegates recommended by the Hartford Convention, were on their way to Washington, they heard this news of peace, and it was said, that when they first heard it, they were confused and confounded; that Mr. O——, when at table, was in a reverie, for when they passed the bread, he did not notice it. One asked him "if he would have a piece?" He said, "we can't have this peace, it will ruin the people of Boston!" Many other expressions escaped him that clearly evinced, that it was not peace that was desired by them, but the exaltation of their party politics, and gain by trading with the enemy. The people of Boston had improved their neutrality to run goods from the British lines, and this peace spoiled their prospects of gain, therefore the peace would injure the people of Boston.

I felt thankful that God had confounded the wise in their craftiness, and brought to nought their schemes of mischief.

After I returned from the army, I visited the prisoners in Pittsfield. There were several thousand, that had been taken by Generals BROWN and SCOTT, and others, on the lines of Canada. Many of them

were allowed to work for half a dollar per day, and they lived well. Thirteen of them professed to experience religion while with us, and those in the prison informed me that they fared well, and had good rations. Some said they fared better with us than they did in Canada. One of those who had experienced religion said, if I would say it was right for him to desert, he would do so, and live in this country. I asked him if he enlisted voluntarily? and if he had taken the oath of allegiance to the Prince Regent? and if he had been paid his wages? &c. To all these he answered, yes. I then said, you ought not to desert. The tears ran down his face when he heard this. I said, be of good cheer, my dear fellow, you can live religion in the army, though it is more difficult; but remember, it is principle that binds us to our governments. I am bound to support this government, and you are bound to support the British government, until you obtain a legal discharge from it, and then if you come under this government, you will be equally bound to support this; but you must discharge your duty by yield ing obedience to the government you are under, and serve God while so doing. He wept, and said, "I will do my duty, painful as it may be, by the grace of God assisting me, I'll do my duty."

Some have said that soldiers cannot be religious, and that war is wrong in all cases. Such people are very contracted in their views of religion itself, and of the dispensations of God's judgments; they little think that they indirectly say, God's judgments are

wrong. War is a judgment God sends upon a wicked nation, and though war originated first from the malevolent passions of men; yet God designs that those who take the sword, shall perish with the sword; therefore defensive war is always right, while offensive war is always wrong. But subjects under all civil governments, are bound to obey those who have the rule over them, whether the war is right or wrong, at least so long as those who administer the government, solemnly regard the constitution that makes them lawful administrators of government and no longer. For if men who are set to administer government, shall disregard the constitution, and attempt tyrannically to enslave their subjects, as the king and parliament of Great Britain did to the American colonists before the revolution; by taxing America without giving them a just representation according to their constitution; the subjects are right in such a case, in opposing such tyrants and rebels. I say such rebels, for the king and parliament rebelled against the constitution of the nation, (*if they had any,*) at least what they called a constitution they set at nought, and therefore they were the rebels, and the colonists had a right to establish a government for themselves. Then the obligation of those subjects in the colonies ceased, and the only question to be decided by them was, the expediency of going to war against the king and parliament of Great Britain, for as the wise man said, Prov. xx. 18, "*Every purpose is established by counsel, and with good advice make war.*" This they did in the name of the Lord; and

by the blessing of God, they taught the tyrants of England, that government consisted in principle, correct principle that rules the rulers as well as the people. And I pray God that the principles of justice and equal rights, may continue to be the foundation of government in this happy country, while the world shall stand.

But though England, after an eight years war, acknowledged us an independent nation, yet they envied us our peace and prosperity. They broke faith a number of times with our administrators of government; they labored to divide us, and sent JOHN HENRY to Boston to negotiate with the Federalists to give the tone of rebellion in case of a war. They had robbed us of many of our sailors, and violated our rights of commerce, contrary to the law of nations. These robberies of our seamen, and violations of our rights, were complained of by our nation for twenty years, without obtaining any redress. Our christian meekness as a nation, and our divisions in party politics, only encouraged them to continue their abuses, until we despaired of "mending their manners" without war.

All diplomatic measures, it seems, only served to increase the difficulty. Justice and mercy are two glorious attributes of the Deity, but neither of these can be exercised in creation and providence without limitation. Mercy ceases to be mercy over a certain degree of forbearance—so also of justice. Our wise administrators proved them in every way, and found that nothing would satisfy the haughty English, but

a surrender of our independence. Therefore the only alternative we had, was to give up our independence, or fight once more to maintain it, and like wise and good men, our administrators chose the latter. But now, for wise or learned men to say that this war was unjust or unrighteous, is only to be accounted for from the fact that they were deluded by a little insignificant spirit that governed some in the party politics of the day, called "love of office." This spirit made them so thirst for office, that it drank up all their patriotism, and left them in a high fever, which was like to terminate in desperation.

I often prayed to the Lord to overrule this political madness, and to preserve our beloved America from civil war, well assured that if virtue and correct principles could prevail and rule over us, we should always prosper.

The gospel of Christ is a peaceful gospel; it makes brethren of the same family love each other: soldiers of the same regiment or army love each other, in proportion as they love God and their country. And members of the same civil community, labor above all things to promote the peace and happiness of that community. My whole soul was delighted with the sentiments of religion expressed by General MARION. And I pray God, that his views of religion may become the governing principle of those who have been guilty of opposing the general government, and of such as cry peace, peace, when there is no peace; or rather are at peace with our enemies, and at enmity with our own government. General MARION seems

not only to be a soldier, but a Christian ; not a bigot nor a hypocrite. When a friend of his informed him that the Methodists and Baptists were progressing rapidly in some parts of the state, he replied, "well, thank God for that ;—that is good news." The same gentleman then asked him which he thought was the best religion ? "I know of but one religion (he answered) and that is *hearty love of God and man.* This is the only true religion ; and I would to God our country was full of it ; for it is the only spice to embalm and immortalize our republic. Any politician can sketch out a fine theory of government, but what is to bind the people to practice ? Archimedes used to mourn that though his mechanic powers were irresistible, yet he could never *raise the world,* because he had no place in the heavens, whereon to fix his pulleys. Even so, our republic will never be raised above the shameful factions, and miserable end of all other governments, until our citizens come to have their hearts like Archimedes' pulleys, fixed on heaven.

"The *world* sometimes makes such bids to ambition, that nothing but *heaven* can-out-bid her. The heart is sometimes so *embittered,* that nothing but Divine love can *sweeten* it ; *so enraged* that *devotion* only can becalm it ; and so broken down, that it takes all the force of heavenly hope to raise it. In short, religion is the only sovereign and controlling power over man. Bound by that, the rulers will never *usurp,* nor the people *rebel.* The former will govern like fathers, and the latter obey like children.

And thus moving on, firm and united as a host of brothers, they will continue invincible as long as they continue virtuous."

These were the sentiments of General MARION, one of the heroic officers of the revolution. But when I contrast his liberal sentiments of religion with those of the clergy, who have fomented evil speaking, and opposition to the general government, I am ashamed of New England, the land of my fathers. Where is thy boasted goodness? How are thine altars (sacred to religion) polluted by the minister preaching his party politics and vehement invectives, slandering the best of men ! Take a quotation from Dr. PARISH of Byefield, Mass., in a sermon preached on the public fast day, April 7, 1814, as a sample of evil speaking. He said, "you may as well expect the cataract of Niagara to turn its current to the head of Superior, as a WICKED CONGRESS to make a pause in the work of destroying their country, while the people will furnish the means." Again, "like the worshippers of Moloch, the supporters of a VILE administration, sacrifice their children and families on the altar of Democracy. Here we must trample on the mandate of despotism, or here we must remain slaves forever."*

After travelling Pittsfield circuit two years, I was appointed to Litchfield circuit. Here I travelled one year with brother COCHRANE. The work of the

* For a further quotation from this sermon, see AMMAH PHILOM's address to the people of New England, page 30 to 34.

Lord was glorious this year. I believe six hundred were converted, but many joined the Congregationalists. In these days the Charitable Society (so called,) issued an address to raise the sympathies of the people to give liberally for the education of indigent pious young men for the ministry of the Gospel. The Andover Institution was extolled as the best means to make ministers, and our country was said by the authors of the address, to be more deplorably destitute of religious instruction, than any other Christian nation under heaven. They set forth our country to be very wretched, and said, "from every pulpit in our land, the trumpet must sound *long and loud*, the tracts and magazines, and even the press must *groan* in the communication of our *wretchedness*." This harangue made a great stir. Mr. BEECHER, of Litchfield, was chairman of their committee; he wrote the address, and as it is stated that there were not more than three thousand educated ministers in our nation, to supply a population of eight millions, estimating one minister to a thousand—we were deficient five thousand ministers. Alas! and a lack a-day, how wretched are we! They allowed that there might possibly be one thousand five hundred nominal ministers, i. e. ministers only in name, that's all; and what made them worse than nothing, was, they said they were generally ignorant men, and despisers of learning. On this account, my friend AMMAH PHILOM, wrote an address to the good people of New England, in which he makes very free remarks on this address of the Charitable Society. And to give the reader

my views of the subject, I will insert an advertisement I wrote for him:

ADVERTISEMENT.

PHILOM was a little too severe,
When first he did appear:
It being then a time of frost and cold,
That froze the printer's types, and made him scold.
And Philom too, was hurried to the life,
To view and review all the combined strife,
Of philanthropic measures to engross
All profit, honor, power and force;
To educate and qualify young men
To preach, in missionary tours,
And tell the people when
God did decree their fate in woe or bliss,
And if for woe they cannot miss,
Though all unite their powers.

But what, though Philom was severe?
He'd matter there and matter here,
Enough to make a wise man mad:
What! like oppression when it springs,
From Priests and Lawyers, and from kings?
To drain our purse
And leave a curse,
By teaching men to lie and cheat,
In begging money to complete
Their schemes, and make them glad.

But then, a little too severe won't do,
——— Though he speak true,
For if to make
A settled state,
Some Priests run mad for gold;
And all combine
To spend their time,
In sounding trump both long and loud,
In mournful strains to teach the crowd,

How wretched we
Shall always be,
Till church and state shall both agree,
To warm us in their fold.
All, all's alike the same,
——— severe or plain,
If God decreed all things that come to pass,
It makes no odds to them or me,
To think as one or disagree.
All, all's alike the same,
None are to blame,
As true as Romans tend to mass.

* * * * * * *

But Philom don't believe this creed,
That all things were by God decreed;
No! he believes no such a matter,
Then read and hear him out,
See what he's been about,
Where combin'd institutions play,
In sounding trump both night and day,
With groaning press,
They cannot rest,
But makes an awful clatter.

CHAPTER XVI.

This year our Congregational brethren carried on the blockading system; that is, when the Methodists had meeting, they would appoint their meetings near by, so as to prevent as many as possible from coming to our meetings. This I call a blockading system; and when we had a work of religion in any place, then they would come and set up meetings too, though they had none there before. This looked like a laudable opposition, for the Apostle saith, Phil. i. 15—18, "Some indeed preach Christ, even of envy and strife, and some also of good will. What then? Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." I was happy in the thought, that the Methodists had been instrumental of a general revival of religion throughout New-England. What a change, thought I, in *twenty* years. Our zeal for God, and his precious cause, has stirred up many, and provoked the Congregationalists and Baptists to love and good works.

The Methodists under God, have been the instruments of a great work, in not only converting souls,

but in provoking Christians to love and good works. In some places Congregationalists and Baptists are as zealous as the Methodists, only they are not willing to own that the Methodists are instruments in the hands of the Lord of this revival among them. Indeed some are unwilling to allow God any credit for sending the Methodists into New-England, or the Methodists any credit as instruments of the revivals of religion in any place. But they must come to it yet, they love the truth too well to abuse it without shame, and as they become more and more pious, and get acquainted with religious experience, so as to say something more than "I hope I'm converted," or "I hope I've got a hope," they will know the truth, and the truth will make them free—then their love will be without dissimulation, their love will cast out the fear they have of the Methodists, and receive our love towards them. This work begins to show itself to the joy of my heart. We love all professing Christians; I say *we*, because I have heard my brethren in the ministry declare their sentiments, and I believe their profession of love to be sincere. But when any of them profess to commit sin every day and every minute, in thought, word, and deed, in love to their souls, we will exhort them to repent and get their souls converted. If this, our love, is not acknowledged by them, we must still exhort them, for we do not believe that men can be bond slaves to sin and Satan, and at the same time be Christ's followers. We are servants to whom we

yield ourselves servants to obey, whether of sin unto death, or of righteousness unto holiness.

In 1816 and 1817, I travelled Granville circuit; and here we had a good revival of religion. In West Springfield, Suffield, Windsor, Symsbury, Barkhemsted, Hartland, Granville, Granby, Southwick, and in many other places, many were converted. Bro. David Miller was my colleague the first year. We labored to do all the good we could, by preaching what we viewed to be the pure doctrines of the Gospel. I felt encouraged to bear down with all my might against the devil and sin, and preach the doctrine of perfection, as the Methodists hold it, in every place.

I changed with brother Merritt, and went to preach for him in Old Springfield, while he preached for me in West Springfield. This was a time of refreshing to my soul and many others; some were convicted and converted by this means. When I came around the circuit to West Springfield, I was informed that a man and his wife, by the name of Fletcher, were awakened under my preaching in Old-Springfield, and on Wednesday evening in prayer-meeting, they were both converted. "Fletcher!" said I, "What Fletcher?" "O," said one, "I don't know; but he says he used to know you some where to the westward; but he will be here to see you on Sabbath." The next day when I saw him, I learned that he was the son of Captain Fletcher. His brother Lemuel was awakened by my preaching

in Hinsdale, (as he informed me,) near twenty years before, and moved to a place west of Cherry-Valley, where he was a class-leader some years, and had died happy in the Lord. LEMUEL, before his death, informed me also of his sisters, LYDIA and POLLY, who were awakened about the time he was, and now ENOCH is converted through my instrumentality.—Surely, said I, these are thy marvellous works, O Lord, my God. When I was twelve years old, I had a revelation that I should be the means of the conversion of several of this family. And glory be to God, it has come to pass even as it was promised. Though I am without a college education, and the least of all Christians, yet the Lord has shown me the error of Calvinism, and the truth of His word, and made me instrumental in the conversion of souls. These things were revealed to me when young, and now they conspire to strengthen my weak hands and make me bold in God, to preach "the Gospel of God with much contention." 1 Thess. ii: 2.

I was led to preach the doctrine of perfection, as the Methodists hold it. But many in these parts are still violently opposed to it, and some intimated that I was positive beyond the degree of evidence I offered. *Evidence* is a light thing with those who love sin and hate holiness. Others marvelled at the doctrine. Perfection seemed to them to be such an attainment in the grace of God, as to free a man not only from doubts of his good estate, but from the fear of death. And none but the Methodists durst profess this; though many of them were half-hearted in this work. But

while the Presbyterians hold the same doctrine in their confession of faith, on justification, adoption, and sanctification, yet they deny their own confession of faith in opposing the Methodists. But their doctrines of adoption and sanctification, contain the whole amount of the Methodist doctrine of Christian perfection. The practice of the Congregational ministers in New England, in preaching against perfection, merely to oppose the Methodists, has confused themselves and their hearers, and done much hurt. I have often seen them labor to prove that Christians could not live without sin; they did not say how much sin would keep a man alive, but in making out proof they quote the Apostle to the Romans, chapter seven. In doing this, they affirm that the Apostle when he wrote, *was carnal, sold under sin.* But we believe this good apostle there wrote the exercise he had, when under conviction, and before he was converted; therefore he, to illustrate his views of the use and excellence of both the law and the Gospel, personates one under the law, convicted, and finally converted. He begins by speaking in the past tense. "I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." Then he goes on to state his exercise while under conviction of sin, until he cries out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death." He, by the Gospel, learned who could deliver, and says, "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ." The Gospel teaches us who can save us; the law knows no

mercy, and therefore, teaches no salvation: and though by the law is the knowledge of sin; yet it is the Gospel only that gives us the knowledge of salvation, by the remission of sins, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Our Apostle having learned this salvation, was able to say from experimental knowledge, "There is, therefore, *now* no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," &c. "For the *law of the Spirit of life* in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death." But for my Presbyterian brethren to confound liberty from sin with bondage to sin, is an inconsistency that learned men ought to be ashamed of. Though I am far from being a learned man, yet I am so much ashamed of their inconsistency, that I heartily wish I had no cause to reprove it, or to accuse them of it.

Having taught the people that they sin in all they do, even in their best prayers; to prove it they reasoned thus: conviction for sin, is a fruit of the Spirit, because it is written, "*He shall convince the world of sin.*" Therefore, if we were not convinced that we committed sin in our most solemn prayers, we did not bear the fruit of the Spirit of God; but if we were sensible that we committed much sin in our prayers, we were great Christians, and in a good way to live long: for they said we could not *live* long without sin. O how some pitied me for my delusion, as they called it; because I did not profess to commit sin. I had said that I lived without sin, and lived very comfortably without it.—And I viewed their notions and reasons as a delu-

sion, and told them so; not being a learned man myself they were almost angry. Some said it was insufferable. But they had no law to whip me at the tail of a cart, as our fathers did the Baptists and Quakers. So they had to bear it as patiently as they could. Many of them manifested a good degree of meekness, and this I viewed to be a fruit of the Spirit of God. However, I did not believe they sinned in their prayers as they professed to. The text, "He shall convince the *world* of sin," they ought to know cannot apply to Christians; *they* are not of the *world*. If a Christian commit sin, he thereby changes his relation. "*He that committeth sin is of the devil.*" Therefore, their mistake arose either from a wrong application of Scripture, or from a love of sin. I was not willing to believe that they opposed perfection because they hated it; and to say it was because they were ignorant of the true sense of the Scripture, was mortifying to those who had been educated in theological institutions. This made it difficult to get along smoothly, and give no offence to saint or sinner. I often thought that if a man entered college a blockhead he would come out a blockhead. And as I never hew blocks with a razor, I must use such plain speech as should serve for a broad-axe, to dress the blockhead as well as I can, and make him ashamed to plead for sin in Christians. So I offended some, grieved some, and pleased others, and some stood amazed at what I said.

This year I had a singular dream. I thought that the judges and lawyers of the county had assembled together, and I was brought before them for trial for my life. I thought they talked among themselves, and said something I could not understand. At length, one said to the judge, "your honor must pronounce sentence of death upon him." The judge then turned to me, and said, "you are condemned to be hanged; and I therefore sentence you to be hanged, and in three days from this, the sheriff must hang you by the neck until you are dead! dead!! And may God Almighty have mercy on your soul!" He then whispered to the other judges and some lawyers, and turning to me, said, "you are at liberty to go any where in this town, for three days, but not to go out of it at your peril." I said, "I have three appointments that will detain me in this town three days, but when I have attended them, sir, I shall leave it; as to your orders, I disregard them as I do the 'idle wind'; therefore, when I have attended my appointments, I shall leave the town, unless you prevent me by force." I then left them, but I soon began to think that they might hang me, and after I was dead, report me to have been guilty of some crime, for which they lawfully condemned me, and thereby disgrace the Methodists and my family. So to prevent this, I sent for my wife and eldest son, that I might inform them of my innocence, and of the unjust sentence pronounced against me. I thought my wife and son came to me in great haste, just before the sheriff arrived to take me to the

place of execution. My son said, "father, have you petitioned to the Governor for a pardon?" I said, "no." "O, father! why didn't you?" I said, "I am not guilty of any crime, and therefore I'll ask pardon of no man." My wife said, "but they may take your life, and I fear they will." I said, "well, my dear, it is but to die, and I fear not death, it will be a consolation to you and the children, to know that I die innocent." Just then, while we were talking, the sheriff came to carry me to execution. He said to me, "you have but one hour to live, sir." I said, "my wife and son have just come to see me, and I wish to talk with them awhile." He said, "very well," and turning from me, he went to the judge and lawyers, who I perceived were standing a little way off. I heard him say to them, "he is not frightened in the least." The judge said, "ask him if he don't want to be pardoned." The sheriff then turned back, and asked me. I said, "no, I have not transgressed any laws, and I ask pardon of no man!" He returned and informed them. The judge then said, "well, tell him he is pardoned." I said to my wife, "this thing must not go so," and stepping up to the judge, I said, "has my wife or son asked any pardon for me?" He said, "no." "Well, how is it, sir, you have condemned me without stating any crime, and I declare to you, and to all, that as I have not sinned, I ask no pardon at your hands. Why have you condemned me without first proving me guilty? and now pardoned me without my asking for it?" He said, "you have professed

to live without sin, and you have preached the doctrine of perfection so positively, which doctrine we do not believe. We therefore thought if we condemned you to be hanged, and you were not frightened, we could then believe in the doctrine, as we should have an evidence of its truth, if you were not afraid to die." I said, "you would have believed the doctrine of perfection if you had believed the Scripture, so that there was no need of this experiment to obtain the knowledge of it; but now you have put me to the expense and trouble of sending for my wife and son; therefore I think you ought to pay the cost you have put me to." But they would not pay any thing; no, not even the turnpike-gate fees. I felt grieved. My son said, "this is curious, but it is like the other treatment you have received; if they can obtain knowledge, they care not how much trouble and cost they put you to." I thought sure enough, men seek instruction, but they are not willing to pay for it. So I awoke very happy in mind, and found it was a dream. But, thought I, if I preach the necessity of sin to the people, they will pay all my expenses freely, but if I preach perfection, I must bear my own expenses.

The custom of the Congregationalists and Baptists, in preaching that Christians committed sin in all they did, was not only a grief to me, but it perplexed me very much at times; for I firmly believed that many of them, both ministers and members, were good Christians, but they were always preaching or telling how wicked they were. They said

they sinned in thought, word, and deed, every day; and this I heard again and again, so that I often felt ashamed for them, and perplexed to know how to manifest that Christian urbanity and fellowship that constitutes charity. For, if what they say of themselves be true, they are verily wicked sinners; but if it be not true, they lie about themselves, or else they are deceived. I sometimes said to them, "you are deceived." But this offended them, and they would dispute it warmly. Then I would say, "if you were to talk of me as slanderously as you do of yourselves, I would prosecute you in the civil law for *slander*."

To smooth a life of sin, and make it consistent with Christianity, seemed to me at times, to be the ultimate design of the Calvinists and Universalists in denying perfection and moral agency; and for this reason also, they deny conditional election.—But it is possible that all this may arise from mistaken opinions or delusion. We pity the heathen who perish for lack of knowledge. But who among us, know their sins forgiven? Is it those who commit sin every minute, and such as say they do not know, and cannot know their sins forgiven? Verily no; but if they cannot know this, how are they better than heathen? They dance and gambol like heathen, and say to God, "depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways!" Job xxi: 14. I must say, O the times! O the manners! But I hope the time will come when at least men of candor will be ashamed to plead for sin in this manner.

I am encouraged to hope for this, because when one said he could not live without sin, and I asked him how much sin would keep him alive? he blushed and appeared to be ashamed of his plea. And another who said, "if he were to be without sin, he could not stay in this world one minute." I asked him "where he thought he would go to, if he died without sin?" He said "to Heaven, to be sure!" "Well," said I, "would you commit sin for the sake of living in this world, and for fear you should die suddenly, and go to Heaven?" He blushed, and made no answer. I was glad to see him blush. Such things strengthen my hope that the time will come, when people will be ashamed of such pleas for sin. But as these were only men of common learning, and as I have never known men professing great learning, and who held this doctrine, to blush, it seemed to me that because they were so full of words, and had so much to say, that they had no room for blushes. And as words are arbitrary signs, and mean just what the learned please to have them, therefore, they would often say, "you did not take my meaning, sir." When they said, unconditional election, I supposed they meant, there was no condition in the covenant of electing grace. And when they said, "Christ did die for all, and that he did not die for all," I considered it a contradiction. But they said, "you don't understand my meaning, sir." And when they said, election was conditional, and it was not conditional, I considered that also a contradiction.—

But they would say, "you don't understand my meaning, sir." I was sorry that I had not learning enough to understand their meaning, for I had no doubt but they were honest good men, and had a sacred regard for truth. Yes; I often thought, that they had so sacred a regard for the truth in itself, that if one of their sons or servants went about the neighborhood, telling as contradictory stories about the customs and fashions of the neighbors, as they did about God and Christianity, they would flog him for a liar. But if they knew that their child had been led to the belief of what he said, by the instruction of an artful, cunning man, who was capable of instilling a belief of his stories into the mind of the child without the child's perceiving the falsehood, he would not whip him for a liar, but he would pity him as I do those ministers who have been to colleges and theological seminaries, where the presidents and professors had the faculty of instilling the principles of Calvinism into the minds of their pupils without their knowing it.

And therefore, when the dear simple good man comes from the college or seminary, a candidate for the ministry, by the by, with instructions not to preach up doctrines; but to preach as nearly like the Methodists as he can; and yet to be sure and hold these Calvinistic sentiments as their great emporium of Divine theology, though it is not intended by them to deceive, but to please the people for their good to edification; yet I pity that kind of ministers, for they are straitened like one that has to go two

ways at once; they mean well, but they seem to be meddling with things that are too high for them. Though as I was not a man of learning, and did not understand their meaning, I concluded I must never judge any one without mercy. They might mean more than they expressed, and something better. But for fear they should at some unguarded time, speak contrary to what they meant, I proclaimed the words of HOMER, an old heathen poet. "He who speaks contrary to what he means, ought to be held a common enemy, and hated as the gates of hell." O how this sounded in New England; some thought I was a learned man, because I quoted an old author, who wrote in what is called a dead language; but to undeceive them, I told them I read it in an English book. "Well," said they, "you have got a good memory." O learning! thou sweet handmaid of the human mind! How flauntingly thou art dressed up by some, who worship thee as a goddess and expose thy emptiness. But "*wisdom* hath builded *her* house, and hewn out her seven pillars," while thy temples are airy castles, desirable in the eyes of those who love fulsome praise. But wisdom is the principal thing; her seven pillars represent *to me*, the seven cardinal doctrines of the Gospel: therefore, O my soul, build thou on those seven pillars. The first, is the doctrine of the fall of man by sin. Second, redemption by the death and blood of Jesus Christ. Third, repentance and faith. Fourth, justification by faith. Fifth, perseverance in love, and sanctification or perfection. Sixth, the resurrection

of the body. Seventh, the general judgment, and rewards and punishments.

These are my seven cardinal doctrines; the pillars of my spiritual house. On these I have firm foot hold. I preach as well as I can, to convince all, that first, man by nature is sinful and lost. Second, by grace he is redeemed and restored to agency and life. Third, repentance and faith are required of every one. Fourth, the Lord forgiveth *him* or *her* that believeth in Jesus. Fifth, pardon opens heaven to the soul; and to persevere in love, ensures a reward of happiness. Sixth, though death may triumph over this mortal body awhile, yet Christ will come, and death shall be destroyed. This mortal shall put on immortality, and the saints will sing, "O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!" Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ. Seventh, the Judge will say to the righteous, "come ye blessed," and to the wicked, "go ye cursed." Then will all see the difference between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not. O my God, help me to proclaim,

"Jesus the name high over all,
In hell, or earth, or sky,
Angels and men before it fall,
And devils fear and fly."

But I found Calvinists and Universalists opposed to the doctrines that proved man to be a moral agent, or capable of complying with the condition of salvation. Therefore, good works or faith, as far as it is

an act of the creature, must be preached down by them. Some spoke sneeringly of it, and labored and sweat hard sometimes, to guard their people against the erroneous notion of believing that works or faith were a condition of salvation. The Calvinists in New England, or more properly, Hopkinsians, or Congregationalists or Presbyterians (for they seem to be each and every one of these, so if one name won't do they can have two, or three, or four) sometimes preach like the Methodists, and some good has been done while they continued it, without contradicting themselves.—But it seemed they were for having a "streak of lean and a streak of fat" to feed their people with. And therefore, they would introduce a little Calvinism slyly in soft words; but instead of making it better, they made their preaching quite unsavory. But some, not very ingenious, would preach in one part of a sermon that *man* hath an ability to come to Christ, and in the other part say he hath not an ability to come to Christ; he hath a WILL endued with natural freedom, and yet it is not free; for according to the *Saybrook Platform*, the "*will is naturally free.*" But according to the Congregational theology, this same *will* is under the control of a moral *inability*, which supposes a total absence of *free volition.* It is the sinner's fault, they would say, if he does not come to Christ, and yet he cannot come, because the Lord does not draw him quite hard enough. Christ died for all, and yet he did not die for all. At one time they deny holding to the doctrine of unconditional election, and in other company,

they declare that election is unconditional. Then accuse them of a contradiction, and they will say, "you did not take my meaning, sir." But Universalists stick to unconditional election, and utterly deny any condition in it. Therefore, they seem to be more consistent. How they will extol Christ as a mighty Saviour! They say he died for all, and they have Scripture to prove it; yes, and to save all he died for is the work of God, who dare deny this? I dare not. But, I would ask, how does God save sinners? They would answer, "by giving his Son to die for them, and he has promised to give him the heathen, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, and the promises of God are yea and amen. And therefore he will do it." But, I ask, is there no condition required of the creature? They will say no, the covenant was with Christ, and he fulfilled the condition of it for the creatures. O how they will insist upon such texts as these, "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked," Ezek. xxxiii. 11. "Who will have all men to be saved."—1 Tim. ii. 4. "God worketh all things after the counsel of his *will.*"—Ephes. i. 11. Then they expatiate on the *will* and *pleasure* of God, and say a great man y good things, and leave out a great many more; with a design to impress the mind with a belief that God must do all that is to be done to save sinners, just as though it was no part of the will of God that men should repent, and be freed from sin in this world through faith in Christ as a condition of their eternal salvation. This doctrine of

conditional election troubles them more than their sins do. Condition!! Stop, Universalist, don't run,—condition I say; hear it, and think of it! If it be a truth that God in working all things that he has wrought, did make a condition in the covenant of his grace with men, after the counsel of his own will, you deceive yourselves, by not fulfilling the condition on your part, in this day of your probation. But if it be truth, that there is no condition, then you are almost as right as a Deist, and neither so right as the devil. But if there is a covenant of grace with man, ordained in the hands of a Mediator, and that covenant contains a condition for the creature to fulfil, then you and the devil are found in rebellion against God. But I believe there is a condition, and Universalists do not. Therefore, we are not agreed. Universalism has grown out of Calvinism, and is quite an improvement of that doctrine, inasmuch as it dashes out reprobation altogether, and allows the Almighty to decree the eternal happiness of all his creatures, devils and all; and to make it easy for them there is nothing for them to do as a condition of their salvation. Christ has done all, and made their salvation sure; as to sin, it is a kind of profitable evil, that does not hurt God at all, nor endanger the salvation of any one for whom Christ died. Whoever believes this without any doubt, is just as happy as though it were true. A belief in an opinion, and a belief in Christ, are two things: Jacob believed the lies of his sons, in the case of Joseph, and it caused grief—so believing a lie about going to heaven will create joy. And

while Calvinists and Universalists deny the conditions of salvation by grace, for the sake of maintaining eternal decrees, respecting unconditional election, I must view them as persons deceived in their opinions. And their pleading for sin, and preaching against good works, as they have done, render them suspicious characters. It is not wisdom to extol mercy at the expense of justice; and it is impious to trifle with the justice either of God or man. Universalists so extol the mercy and power of God, that they exclude all punishment, and all retributive justice. It is trifling with common sense to suppose the sufferings of this present life, and the death of the body only, is all the punishment impenitent sinners are to receive as their reward for wickedness: and trifling with common sense or justice, is a sure mark of dishonesty. If there be no future punishment of the wicked, and their sufferings in this life are all that is meant by punishment for sin, then there can be no retributive justice; for the righteous are as really punished for righteousness, inasmuch as they suffer for righteousness' sake, as the wicked are for wickedness. Besides, this trifling with common justice and sense, represents civil rulers as the most ungodly set of beings that ever existed; for they punish men for crimes; some with imprisonment for life, some they hang. If they were like the Universalists' *god*, they would forgive them all, and put them into posts of honor; but they are not like such a god; therefore they are *ungodly*.

I hope the Universalists will not be angry with me for exposing them as triflers with justice and common sense, so as to damn me, as they do others that do not please them. But triflers are always inconsistent, therefore I have no confidence in them or their god, while they trifle with justice.

Calvinism in New England, as displayed by Congregationalists and Hopkinsian Baptists, was to my mind like Pandora's box, full of all manner of evils, with hope at the bottom. They preached a little of every thing, good, bad, and indifferent; but their motives I believed were good. However, their professing to commit so much sin, even in their most holy things, puzzled me sometimes to know whether they were professors of sin or of religion; and a little pious fraud was not considered any more sinful by some, than dancing. Some expressed an opinion that they could dance without sin, though they could not pray without sin. So a little pious fraud in preaching up the doctrines of the Methodists, when they wanted to proselyte or share a part of the benefit of a revival of religion among the Methodists was no sin; or rather their consciences told them that it was no harm to claim and publish a revival of religion as the fruit of their own labors, when it was manifestly through the labors of others. I saw many instances of this, and I was frequently grieved on reading religious newspapers and magazines, containing their accounts of revivals of religion in places where I knew all about them; but I apologized for them as well as I could. I often thought, if I was sinking I

should catch at straws too, and if pursued hard by an enemy, I also might run into some filthy place to hide myself. But this would not do. The question is, how would you conduct yourself if you had pronounced a sect of ministers, *wolves*, or only *nominal** ministers, and yet saw that those ministers were evidently owned of God, and instrumental in the conversion of souls? Well, thinks I, this would be a hard question, if I had no religion, or if I were a minister that had no fruit of my own labors. But as that is not my case, I can answer it like an honest man, and not catch at straws. I would confess I had been mistaken in my opinion of them, and say to them, brethren, forgive my former mistaken notion of you, and let me have your right hand of fellowship and your prayers. Some individuals of the standing order in New England, have done this towards the Methodists, but it has not been done by the associations officially. However, it seems the learned ministers in this land of steady habits, have such respect to Calvinistic doctrines, and the Methodists are so opposed to the least dreg of them, that they say we are not sound in the faith; besides, we preach the witness of the Spirit, or the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins, which they very properly call an assurance of faith; but they notwithstanding deal out this doctrine very sparingly. Few, very few,

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* Rev. Mr. Beecher's address by order of the Charitable Society.

according to them, ever attain to this knowledge; and as they (the ministers) have been to college, and yet have not attained it, therefore it is rather presumptuous for common kind of people even to expect, much more to profess it. But the Methodists also preach Christian perfection and a possibility of falling from grace, and these doctrines are so contrary to their notions, that they will not ask for the right hand of fellowship just yet.

I often asked myself, would the Methodists doctrines of assurance and perfection, be denied by the ministers in New England, if it were not that they have formed erroneous notions of the true character of God? I think not. I apprehend that their notions of unconditional election, and infallible perseverance have blinded their minds. Would they teach that sin must and will possess Christians during the term of life, if they believed that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin? No! and to be cleansed from all sin, is perfection. To love the Lord with all the heart, is also perfection. The perfection contended for by the Methodists, and taught us in the Scripture, is not a perfection in knowledge, nor the perfection of angels, who are in a state in which they cannot sin; but the perfection of men in a state of probation and moral agency. It is a reconciliation with God, and such a conformity to him as the Gospel requires. They can commit sin, but they need not. Such is the deliverance of the soul from sin, that sin has not dominion over it. I cannot believe they preach against this perfection because they hate

it, or plead for sin because they love it; but they don't see into it, their candle is put out. The extinguisher on the wick, is their notion of divine sovereignty, or unconditional election. Now faith in the all-purifying blood of Jesus Christ would light up their candle, but not with the extinguisher on it. I trust they will not be offended with me if I remind them of the expediency of removing the said extinguisher.

To teach and believe that there is no condition, destroys the obligation of faith and obedience. If the civil powers in New England did not particularly countenance and support those teachers, would learned men preach the doctrine as essential to salvation as some have done? No; I presume not. Truth is mighty. Let the truth have fair play, and not trammel it with legislative partiality and influence, and let those who preach, preach the truth without disguise, like the Apostle who said, "We are not as many which corrupt the word of God," &c., 2 Cor. ii. 17. "Nor handling the word of God deceitfully," 2 Cor. iv. 2. Like the Apostle, let ministers preach Jesus Christ, and him crucified, and sure I am that they will not preach unconditional election and reprobation. Conditional is the opposite of unconditional. The same thing cannot be both conditional and unconditional, because one contradicts the other; and I defy any one to believe that both sides of a contradiction can be true. If one says he does believe thus, it only proves his consummate ignorance of himself, and that he opposes both reason and the

true sense of Scripture. Confusion is the badge of error, and the mind gets confused when it embraces contradictory ideas, or ideas that have not a due weight of evidence to prove them reasonable.

That the Methodists have been instrumental in doing good, is not denied by many that are Calvinists. One eminent writer, speaking of the Methodists, says, "as to their success in doing good, it is evident, that though many ignorant enthusiasts have been found among them, yet no people have done more to moralize mankind than they; nor have they rested there; they have not only contributed to render thousands better members of society, but have been the instruments of promoting their spiritual and eternal interests. By simplicity of language, fervor of address, patience in opposition, unweariedness in labor, piety of conduct, and dependence on Almighty God, they certainly have been the means of doing as much, or more real good than any other denomination whatever." Another shrewd writer, who cannot be suspected of Methodism, very justly says of them, "that these people have, in the last fifty years, instructed more of the lower orders of people in the obligations of Christianity, and have called more from gross vice to piety and virtue, than the church has ever done since the reformation; while at the same time they have not cost the government one farthing, but have been treated with insult and contempt."

I trust the time will come, when some will not only acknowledge that we have not only instructed the lower orders of people, but that we have also instructed many of the high orders, and even prevented many of the clergy from preaching contradictory sentiments in their sermons; in consequence of which many have been reformed.

But I must draw this narrative to a close, though I have not recorded all the important events, nor given my views of all the matters and things that transpired; yet I must come to a close, or I shall swell the cost to be more than I have promised the book for. But I have still many interesting events that I might, and possibly may publish, in another volume. I travelled Chatham circuit in 1818, where we had a good revival of religion, and many interesting events transpired. I was then appointed to the city of New York, where I labored from June, 1819, to the last of May, 1821. Here I ruptured a blood-vessel while preaching in Forsyth-Street Church. After this, I was appointed to Petersburgh circuit, where I labored one year, and the blessing of God attended my labors in some good degree, but I suffered much from weakness and the affection of my lungs; though I preached with as much moderation as I could: I felt myself worn-down. It was my design to ask for a superannuated relation at the next conference, but my presiding elder desired me to continue effective, at least so as to fill the station in Dalton; and my desire also was to continue in some easy station, in hopes I might recover my health, and not entirely break down. But all seemed in vain, my labors in Dalton, though moderate, frequently brought on an inflammation of my lungs. Where-

fore, at the next conference, I asked for a superannuated station, in hopes by abstaining from preaching awhile, I might recover so as to preach and labor as formerly. To do good is my most ardent desire; and while I live, I design to witness for my Lord; that by faith I am justified, and by grace I have a faith to live holy, and serve God in spirit and in truth. Though I have but little religion, yet that little enables me to triumph in the Lord. I fear not death, hell, or the devil, for I have reverently thrown myself under the wings of the cherubim before the mercy seat. This is my city of refuge, and my abiding place, so that I know in whom I have believed, even in Jesus, the name all precious to believers. And it is my desire and design—

"His only righteousness to show,
His saving truth proclaim,
'Tis all my business here below,
To cry, 'behold the Lamb!'

Happy, if with my latest breath
I may but gasp his name,
Preach him to all, and cry in death,
'Behold! behold the Lamb!'"

END OF FIRST EDITION.

CHAPTER XVII

The abtruse subject of metaphysics, I found, was generally rendered perplexing, by the ambiguity of certain words, the writer would introduce, and though the word had a variety of definitions, the writer would fix on the one that best suited his purpose. The doctrine of fate, or that God had decreed whatsoever comes to pass, was in my view the most erroneous. I found the Deists and Universalists believed the doctrine as firmly as the Calvinists did, and from the doctrine they drew a different conclusion from that of the Calvinists. The Deist would not believe the Scripture, nor man's accountability to God, so as to endanger his future state of happiness. As he had decreed all events, there could be no such a thing as sin, as man could do nothing contrary to God's decree. Therefore, they conclude that there is no punishment after death, and the Bible was all priestcraft to frighten ignorant people.

The foundation of their arguments, to prove that "God had decreed whatsoever comes to pass," was founded on the fact that God foreknew all things.

This I never denied, but for years the subject engrossed my attention. In 1797, in answer to a question the Calvinists often proposed, viz., "Did not God foreknow that Adam *would* fall?" led me at that time to note and write down the arguments they used, and the views I embraced of this all-important subject, which will be seen in the following chapters. I have given credit to some authors by inverted commas to whom I am indebted for many arguments. But as some arguments I altered to suit my own views of the subject, I have not so designated; desiring to clothe the subject in the plainest manner I could, and make what was perplexing plain to the reader.

The subject of Divine foreknowledge was frequently alluded to by the Calvinists, whether Presbyterians, Baptists, or Universalists, to prove their doctrine, that "God had decreed whatsoever comes to pass." I found they were particular to affirm, that "God knew *certainly* and *eternally*, all "that would come to pass, by his own agency, and also by the agency of his creatures; and this certain knowledge of future events precluded all contingency, or possibility of failure, and therefore, it was the same as a decree, or it implied a decree." This mode of arguing was calculated to confound all that objected to their doctrines of decrees; for no one was willing to deny that God knew all things. I therefore paid close attention to this subject. At first they said, "God could not know certain whether an event would happen unless he had decreed it." To which I replied, "if God could not know unless he had decreed, then before he decreed he was ignorant, and how can an ignorant being decree things wisely?" Another mode of expressing their doctrine was, by asking, "did not God foreknow that Adam would fall?" I answered, "not so." "What," said they, "do you deny the foreknowledge of God?" "No. I believe that God foreknew that Adam *could* (or might) fall." "Well, what is the difference?" "Why, sir, the difference is this, *would fall*, implies *certainty*, and *might fall*, implies *contingency*." "Well," they would ask, "do you not believe that God's knowledge is certain knowledge?" "Yes, sir, I believe that God knew certain that Adam *might* fall, therefore he admonished him, and God knew certain that he *might* not fall. But if, as you say, that he knew certain that he *would* fall, he could not know certain that he *would* not fall. He knows every thing as it is in fact." Some would answer, "Well, you are right, this is a new idea, and a very consistent one." At another time, I would ask, "Does not all knowledge in God or man imply actual existence?" For instance, non-existence is what we call nothing; and what will not certainly exist, is nothing, and what cannot possibly exist, we call nothing, and to know nothing is no knowledge at all. To know what will certainly exist, or what can possibly exist in future, is what we call foreknowledge, and to know what will certainly exist in future, may imply a decree in some cases, as certainty and necessity are cognate ideas, or related to each other. So also are *possibility*, *contingency*, and *freedom*, related to each other,

the one implies the other." But after awhile, I found some that believed that contingent events were known to be as certain as those events that were decreed, and yet they were contingent. I confess this was the most difficult subject I had met with. I then examined the arguments from the best authors on the subject of certainty, and contrasted them with the arguments for contingency, that I had met with, and I am confident it will be interesting and profitable to the reader to peruse them carefully.

It would seem that no weight should be given to the arguments of the Calvinists, namely, that "God did not know that an event would certainly transpire unless he had decreed it," inasmuch as he did not know certain until he had decreed, which would argue that he was ignorant before he had decreed. But you will notice that certainty in their view implies necessity, and as an effect cannot exist without a cause and without an existence it is nothing, and to know nothing is no knowledge. But if the cause existed in the Divine decree, the effect was certain. But I considered the cause of all moral actions to exist in the creature, that possessed moral agency or freedom to act. He therefore might obey or disobey the command of God: his obedience or disobedience was a contingency. The one was no more certain than the other until they existed.

In reading my Bible, I found that those prophecies of certain events that would come to pass, such as the coming of the Messiah, and the destruction of Babylon, the birth of Cyrus, and the destruction of

Jerusalem, were all decreed: as also the rejection of the Jews, and calling of the Gentiles. But some prophecies were on conditions, and though the condition was not always expressed, yet it was implied, as in the case of Nineveh. Jonah the prophet was angry, when he saw that his prophecy was not certainly fulfilled.

My mind having been deeply impressed with the subject of foreknowledge, called *prescience*, I read many authors, and no one author that I could fully agree with, until I met with an extract on foreknowledge, in Mr. Wesley's American Magazine, ninth volume. With that I fully agree. I shall here insert the words of that author, and then some of the best arguments from other authors that I have met with, as well as my own.

Extract from Mr. Wesley's Magazine.

"It is true, that God by his own Omnipresence, sees necessarily all that is; because all things lie open and bare before him. But this can be said only of what is *already existent*, necessary and inevitable, and not of what is contingent, possible and free; because there is no reality existent in matters purely possible, that can be the object of the Divine perception. When God, therefore, forms the idea of a free creature, he forms that of an intelligence, whose determinations he leaves unconstrained: they may be, or may not be; and, consequently, their happening is only contingent and possible. Now, to see in

the nature of the creatures, or in his own decrees, what is only contingent and possible, as infallible future, and inevitable, is a perfect contradiction. It is to create and annihilate, to form and to destroy, to establish and overturn his object by the same individual act; it is producing a triangular circle.—Wherefore as *we do not derogate from the Divine omnipotence, by denying that he can produce the one, so neither do we impeach the Divine omniscience, by denying that he can see the other.* In both cases, the ideas are incompatible, and their union is impossible, and so that they cannot be the object of the Divine power or knowledge."

(In relation to the actions of intelligent and accountable beings.) "He sees by one single unsuccessive act, all their possible directions, and all the combinations of free and necessary, of moral and physical causes; but he neither foresees, foreordains, nor fixes immutably any one succession of events, that can destroy their free choice. He foresees not all that *will* happen, but all that *can* happen, and provides for all possible contingencies. This is far more perfect than to foresee infallibly only one sort of events, and exclude all the others, by an omnipotent, irresistible power. It is therefore absolutely false to maintain that all the particular actions, passions, and crimes, that all the inspirations, virtues, and graces, that all the wanderings, returns, and determinations of each individual, are so foreseen and fore-determined that one link cannot be broken, without dissolving the whole chain of Providence. Such a fatal

chain, far from being necessary to the accomplishment of God's great design, would entirely destroy them, by converting free agents into spiritual machines.

"Though God *does not foresee*, nor foreordain, as absolutely certain, and infallibly future, all the determinations of free agents, yet he may foresee and foretell, when he pleases, all the natural and necessary consequences of their free determinations."

"He saw the dangers into which we hurry, and to hinder us from falling into them, he is represented in the Holy Scriptures, as admonishing, threatening, exhorting, and weeping over his creatures; yea, exhausting, as it were, all the efforts of his own power, wisdom, and goodness, without success. 'What could I have done more for my vineyard,' says the Holy Ghost, 'that I have not done?' All these solicitations, admonitions, and vehement expostulations, would be useless, if we were not free, and if God acted upon us by an omnipotent, irresistible will. Yea, they would be illusory, *if he foresaw from all eternity*, that free agents would certainly, infallibly, and absolutely do what he exhorts them not to do."

"The system of prescience, when rightly understood, answers all objections, without darkening the matter, by the subtleties, palliations, and subterfuges of the schoolmen. It is by this scheme alone, that we (are able to) confound all the Socinians and Epicureans, as also those of the Fatalists. The two first maintain that God can foresee and foretell none

of the actions of free agents, and so destroy prescience; the last assert, that God sees all the determinations of intellectual agents in his own absolute will, and so destroys liberty. The true medium between these two extremes, consists in maintaining that God can and does foresee, foreordain, and execute whatever he pleases in heaven and in earth; but that he neither foresees nor foreordains as infallibly future, what he leaves to the free choice of intellectual agents, because this is repugnant and contradictory."

This extract I fully approved, while I viewed the Calvinist doctrine of certain prescience to be an attempt to advocate an unoriginated knowledge, as one author observes:

"The doctrine of prescience, in all probability, has formed an integral part of every system of pagan theology, and has been a prominent feature in almost every theological system in the world; except in that fair, and lovely, and rational system of salvation by Jesus Christ, which has been given to mankind by Divine authority."

"In every theological system, which has been formed on the principles of moral necessity, whether pagan or professedly Christian, the doctrine of prescience and fate have been associated as cognate ideas, which have uniformly and of necessity produced each other."

"Whether the doctrine of prescience was originally the parent of the doctrine of predestination, or predestination the parent of prescience, it is, at the

present time, extremely difficult to say; and especially so, as they both belong to that prolific species of error, which has the power of reciprocal generation. A certain anticipation always implies a necessary issue, and an absolute and effectual purpose, a certain anticipation, inasmuch as it is not possible for a certain prescience to be separated from a necessitating cause."

"In the days of Augustine, the doctrine of prescience, and the consequent doctrine of an unconditional predestination, were introduced into the Christian world;* or if they were not propagated by him in the first instance, it was under his authority that they received the stamp and credit of Orthodox, were adopted as articles of Christian faith, were incorporated in the Christian creed, and were introduced into theological writings.

"Since the days of Augustine, the doctrine of an eternal prescience has been generally and very naturally identified with that of unconditional predestination. But subsequent to the darkness of the middle ages of the Christian church, and especially

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* Augustine once was a Manichee, and left them, so the doctrine might first have been preached by the Manichees, and there Augustine learned it. The Manichees professed to believe that there was two principles in the God-head, the one good, by which all the good was decreed; and the other bad, or evil, by which all the evil was decreed. Augustine was first a Manichee, but after awhile left them, and refuted their doctrine, but he retained the essence of it in his notion of election and reprobation, that John Calvin afterwards improved upon.

since the art of printing has been invented, and more particularly, since the right and the competency of private judgment in the interpretation of the Scriptures, has been understood and acknowledged, many religious bodies have disclaimed their belief in the doctrine of predestination, as being incompatible with human responsibility, and the moral government of God."

"The popular, and indeed, the only systematized notion of their doctrine of prescience, is one that would imply *an unoriginated, eternal, and infallible anticipation of all things that ever have existed, that are at this moment in existence, or which will ever be in existence hereafter; and which alike encircles in the unbounded range of its perfection, every action, and every volition, every vice, and every virtue, every pain, every pleasure, of every individual creature which was ever in existence, and which is now in existence, and which will ever be in existence: whether that creature be human or angelic, rational or irrational, animate or inanimate, and to whatever order or species it may belong.*"

"The question at issue is not, whether the Deity may not possibly anticipate many future events, even ages before they have any actual existence, because the possibility and even the fact of such cases are actually demonstrated, by the previous delivery and the subsequent fulfillment of Scripture predictions? but the question is, whether the prescience from whence those predictions emanated, was *eternal* or

recent, unoriginated or *acquired, coeval* or *subsequent to the Divine existence*; and whether that prescience existed *per se*, or by consequence; and whether, as evidence, it contains data *a priori*, or is only involved by deduction *a posterioi?*"

"The consequences which depend upon the foregoing alternatives are exceedingly numerous, and unspeakably important. I will readily concede that it is not possible for an infinite intelligence to be unconscious of anything which is in actual existence, or be unable to recognize at every point of duration, all which at that moment would be abstractedly possible; but the notion of an eternal prescience would oblige me to believe that the total sum of the actual knowledge of the Deity, was of precisely the same amount, before the heavens and the earth were created as it is at the present moment. I must believe that the knowledge of the Divine nature does not originate or depend upon that nature itself; I must believe that the knowledge is unoriginated and eternal, while events themselves are subsequent and successive.

"The certain prescience of all *certain* events, is what every person must believe, who receives the doctrine of an infinite intelligence in the Deity; but the doctrine of an eternal prescience would imply that the Divine intelligence possesses the power of making contingencies *in re* to become certainties in perception; and the power of making those things to stand up altogether at one single moment, as the object of an actual and certain perception, which would

require a boundless duration of being for their actual and real existence.

"I can readily receive the doctrine of prescience as a consequence, because I can easily perceive that if God has formed certain determinations, and has secured the issue by an effectual causation, the issue must become thereby an object of a certain prescience; but if I receive the doctrine of prescience *per se*, I must regard his prescience as being a cause, and not as being an effect or consequence.

"But in reviewing the doctrine of an *unoriginated prescience*, I am not to impute the cognizances of the Deity to any species of causation whatever, inasmuch as they must be absolutely without cause. I must believe, also, that although the acts of the Deity, and the existence and actions of created beings, are subject to constant and perpetual accession, it is not possible for the knowledge of those things in the Deity, to receive any accession in quantity world without end. I am to believe that the certainty of the Divine anticipations must always extend to every future act of his own, through the endless duration of his interminable being, and equally so to all the volitions and actions of created beings, both mortal and immortal. I must not only believe in a certain prescience in relation to all physical events, and to all animal, and vegetable, and mineral, and elementary occurrences, but I must firmly believe in the certain prescience of all moral actions and mental contingences, embracing all their evolutions and consequencies, world without end. And in particular, I must believe in the certain

anticipation of the period and issue of human life, in relation to all the decendants of Adam, and the whole of their future and eternal condition. In short, I must believe, that however contingent the actions of human beings, and the issue of human life may appear to be, or may be in reality to us, they are all as certain as the throne of God, in the anticipation of the Divine mind."

CHAPTER XVIII.

The nature, and acquisition, and bounds of knowledge, and the competency of knowledge in human beings.

"Knowledge in God or man, is a conscious perception, acquired by an intelligent being, of any positive or relative existence, either in himself or in the person of any other being. Human knowledge is not direct in its nature, neither is it immediate in its modes of acquirement. We acquire knowledge, by means which are extraneous to the objects of our knowledge. But the knowledge of the divine being is direct in its nature, and immediate in its mode of acquirement. The physical hypostasis of all things is under his immediate cognizance, (or omnipresent eye,) and therefore, the knowledge of the Deity cannot be limited by the properties and the facts of things, but must extend to every thing that is knowable, both in actual existence, and in abstract possibility.

"But even human knowledge, although it is neither direct in its nature nor immediate in the mode of its acquirement, yet all its legitimate notices must of necessity be correct, and its decisions must uni-

formly possess the authority and stamp of truth. Every hypothesis which would deny the competency of the human understanding, to judge of truth and error when presented to the senses, and brought fairly before the mind, must involve, in its consequences, all the horrors of a universal scepticism, or subject the human understanding to all the vassallage of an implicit credulity; we must, in such a case, either give credit to every thing, or else we must not believe any thing at all. The competency of the human understanding in relation to truth and falsehood, and especially in relation to right or wrong, is the only solid foundation upon which the doctrine of human responsibility can be made to rest. Divine revelation confirms the truth of this argument; a revelation was given to us because we were competent to judge of its truth; and it invites an investigation of its sacred contents, and builds its authority on the rational convictions which it is adapted to produce on the human mind.

"Even the faculties of brutes, and much more the intellect of man, must always be adequate to answer the purposes for which they were originally bestowed; and within the limits prescribed to them by the great Author of all created existence, both the suggestions of brutes' instincts, and the dictates of human reason, must be always of paramount authority. The instinct of an oyster, and the intellect of a cherub, must be equally perfect in their kind, and equally adequate to the purposes for which they were given; and within the sphere of their respective operations, the

notices of the one must be as competent a standard of the truth, as the convictions of the other.

"It is, I presume, agreed on by all parties, that in the order of nature, the knowledge of any fact or event, must always be subsequent to its occurrence; because the fact or event itself, must support the knowledge of its existence. It is true indeed, that knowledge must always imply the actual existence of an intelligent being, who is the possessor of that knowledge, and it is equally true, that the existence of knowledge must always demonstrate the actual existence of the object of that knowledge. But we read of *foreknowledge*, and we believe in the existence of foreknowledge; and especially we believe that the Deity has a prescience of future events. How then is the subject of foreknowledge to be understood, so as to be in unison with the sentiment at the beginning of this paragraph? When the purpose of bringing about a future event, and the causation that is to secure the issue, are now in actual existence, and are the real objects of the divine cognizance; the future event, which is in reality the object of his purpose, and therefore of his anticipations, is expressed as though it were purely an object of *perception*. And for this reason, although foreknowledge, in strict philosophical propriety, would be absolutely inadmissible, yet its application to an anticipated issue, is perfectly admissible and quite intelligible.

"It is also agreed, that the knowledge of an event cannot possibly possess any influence whatever, in

giving either existence or character to the event which it perceives; and that the existence of the knowledge must always demonstrate the existence of the event which is the object of the knowledge; and that the predictions of the knowledge, if competent and true, must demonstrate the properties of the event which is thereby presumed to be known. That which such a knowledge predicates of the event, must actually belong to the event itself. And therefore, if the knowledge predicate necessity, the event must be necessary: if it predicate certainty, the event must be certain; if it predicate possibility, the event must be possible; and if it predicate contingency, the event must be contingent. Now, if the foregoing chain of reasoning be not legitimate, let the objector have the goodness to detect the fallacy.

"Lest my reader should misapprehend what I have said above, on the difference between the competency and the infallibility of human knowledge, it may be well to add a few remarks, which may render my meaning a little more intelligible. I mean by competency, something that may possibly be adequate and successful, but at the same time, may possibly fail. I mean by infallibility, that which must of necessity be successful, and cannot possibly fail. The competency of human knowledge stands on precisely the same ground, as does the competency of human integrity; and they are both of them so indispensable to the righteous probation of human beings, that without them there can be no moral agency

in man, nor any rational or adequate testation of human character."

The above extracts satisfied my mind that the knowledge of a contingency and certainty were distinct; for to know an event would certainly be, and to know that same event might possibly be, was as distinct as to know a truth was not a falsehood. Besides, if God made any thing to be contingent by constituting man a moral agent, He did not know that contingency to be a certainty, and if he did not know that contingent events of moral agents were not contingent, then he did not know all things as he had made them. These views of the subject led me to a chain of reasoning, which enabled me to answer the objections of the Calvinists on different points of theology. One objection they ingeniously brought forward against *the possibility of falling from grace*. At one time they remarked, "that it would imply a severe reproach on the divine government, to suppose that God would ever bestow the blessings of grace upon any person whom he foreknew would certainly be unfaithful in the improvement of it, and would finally be eternally miserable." This argument I considered perfectly tenable on their premises. But in answer to this ingenious argument, I would ask, whether the Creator of the world would not employ as much integrity in our *creation* as in our redemption? And if he would not convert a man in vain, would he create a man in vain? If he would not bestow the blessings of his grace upon any man under a certain prescience of eternal misery;

would he bestow the boon of existence under a certain prescience of eternal misery? And does not the one reflect on the government of the Divine Being as much as the other? If the doctrine of a certain prescience of the moral acts of free agents be true, then, in reality, the real evil in the case would lie in their being created under a certain prescience of their eternal destiny, and not in any subsequent occurrence, for no occurrence of conversion or unconversion, of penitence or impenitence, could possibly alter a certain and eternal anticipation. No man can reconcile it with the goodness or justice of God, that he should bring any man into existence under a certain prospect of misery, and especially of eternal misery; of such a being it could never be said, that "He is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." Such a doctrine of prescience in relation to the finally impenitent, is as utterly incompatible with every notion of righteousness in the Deity, as the most unconditional and eternal reprobation can be.

But even if it were to be conceded that a righteous and benevolent Creator, upon the certain prescience of final and eternal ruin of any creature that he was about to bring into existence, would rather forbear the act of creation, than bestow existence under such a certain prospect of misery; yet such a supposition would evidently involve a contradiction, such a forbearance would be absolutely impossible. The creation of such a being would be as eternally certain, as his destruction would be, and all contingency would

be as totally inapplicable to the one as to the other. Any event that is the object of a certain and infallible prescience, must be absolutely and infallibly incapable of failure in its anticipated issue, neither can it be in the power of an omnipotent Being to defeat or prevent its ultimate occurrence, or to effect any kind of commutation in its final result. If, therefore, the doctrine of an eternal prescience be true, there is an end of all moral agency or freedom in the human mind; and there can be in reality no moral agency in existence, either in the Deity or any of his creatures.

The doctrine of an eternal prescience, is not only inconsistent with the free agency of God, but it is equally inconsistent with the efficient exercise of every divine perfection. Admit a *certain* and infallible anticipation of the final issue of human life, and then tell me what it is possible for any, or for all of his natural and moral perfections to do in altering or defeating the anticipated result? Could even an eternal prescience itself inform the Deity how he might alter the anticipated issue? Could infinite wisdom devise any successful expedient? Could infinite power do any thing towards altering an issue that is *certainly* and infallibly anticipated? Justice might poise her scales, and brandish her flaming sword, but she would not be able to strike one successful blow; mercy might yearn with pity, and burst into tears, but she would not be able to put forth a single hand to save; the wailings of Divine compassion would be as unavailing as the shrieks of

the frantic mother on seeing her child committed to the devouring flames. On the assumption of an eternal prescience, the moral government of the world would be only a wanton delusion or popular credulity.

The error that the human mind is often confused with, consists in supposing that the acts of the Divine Being are infinite acts. The acts are truly the acts of an infinite being, but the acts are finite, except those that are in himself. Creation is the work of an infinite Being, but creation is finite. The law of God is the law of an infinite being, but the law is finite. To know is an exercise of the attribute of wisdom in God, which attribute is eternal and infinite, by which he perceives, and sees all things that he has made. To know, then, is an act of a being that existed before the event existed that was the object of that knowledge.

By an attribute we are to understand those perfections of the Divine Being, which are essential to his existence; and those perfections that are not essential to his existence, are perfections of character; or acts of the Divine Being by which he reveals to his creatures his true character, in a manner best adapted for their understandings. But that we may not confound distinct things, and that we may be fully aware of the difference between *existence* and *action*, and between latent energy and power in actual operation, it will be necessary to pursue the following chain of reasoning.

Existence is absolutely necessary to the Divine Being, because non-existence is impossible; but

creation is not necessary to his existence, because there was a period in duration, when creation did not exist. INTELLECT, or *wisdom*, is necessary to the Divine existence; but the actual knowledge of things beyond his own hypostacies, is not necessary to his existence. The attribute of an infine moral INTEGRITY, is absolutely necessary to the Divine existence; but the active exercise of that integrity beyond his own person, is not necessary to the Divine existence. An infinite BENEVOLENCE is necessary to the Divine existence, but an infinite *beneficence* is not necessary to the existence of the Deity. A CREATIVE ENERGY is absolutely necessary to the Divine existence: a creative energy is universally and eternally necessary; but a universal and eternal creation is neither necessary nor possible.

The active operation of the infinite energy, must be subsequent to the Divine existence, and every act of the Deity must be voluntary and unconstrained, and therefore if every active operation of the universal and eternal mind, must be subsequent to his own existence, then every volition of the Deity must be subsequent to his own existence, and also, every act of the Deity must be subsequent to his own existence, and then by consequence, all consciousness, perception, and knowledge of those volitions and actions, must be, of necessity, subsequent to his actual existence.

To confound the acts of the Divine Being with his own eternity, is not reason or argument. If all the purposes of God, and all his actions were as unoriginated and eternal as his own existence, such an assumption would deify his acts and volitions, and by that very means, it would rob the Deity himself of his own Divinity; for if all the volitions, and all the acts of the supreme Being are indeed eternal and unoriginated in their existence, then it must follow that he never did conceive any purpose, or execute any design, and it will equally follow that he never will have it in his power either to conceive any purpose or execute any design. The volitions and actions of the Deity are indeed the efforts of an infinite being; and yet the efforts of even an infinite being must themselves be finite. Supposing the acts of the Deity to be infinite, the existence of the first act would preclude the possibility of a second, since the idea of a second infinity is as gross an absurdity as ever was presented to the human mind. A proper idea of infinity must imply a universality of existence, as well in the amplitude of space, as to the perpetuity of a boundless duration. I will repeat this; I say then, that infinity must always imply an unbounded expanse of space, and an unbounded extent of duration, and therefore, it is no more capable of being included in any single act of the Deity, than in any single volition of the human mind. But if divinity belong of necessity to any of the acts and volitions of the Divine perfections, it must of necessity follow that the properties of divinity belong to every volition, to every act, and to every production of the supreme Being. For if Divinity may be predicated of the knowledge of his volitions, it may be more truly pre-

dicated of the volitions themselves ; if Divinity may be truly predicated of the knowledge of his acts, it may be more truly predicated of the acts themselves ; and if Divinity may be truly predicated of the knowledge of his created productions, it may be more truly predicated of those created productions themselves.

Will those Christians who advocate this doctrine of eternal prescience, ever hereafter wonder that Pagans, destitute of Divine revelation, should deify the heavenly bodies, and the powers of nature ? While they themselves continue to attribute divinity to every volition, and every act, as well as every production of the Divine Being ? Tell me not of the gross idolatry of Pagan worship ; we have millions of gods for every one of theirs ; if all the volitions, and all the acts, all the purposes, and all the cognitions of the Deity, are themselves so many infinite and eternal divinities ! They are as numerous as the drops in the river, as the atoms contained in the whole universe ! !

Little do the advocates of this theory think that they deny the infinite free agency of God, and also, that they impugn the wisdom, veracity, and the goodness of God, by confounding contingency with certainty ; and thereby also, they deny the moral agency of man. If God knew certain that Adam *would* fall, he would have been disappointed if he had not have fallen ; inasmuch as he knew certainly and *eternally* that he would transgress. If their notion of prescience be true, we may also infer from it, that prescience rules the Deity, inasmuch as he could no

hinder Adam's transgression, which was as certain in his mind as the throne of God. Therefore it is, that prescience is only another word for *fate*.

The Deists believe this doctrine of prescience, and make it the foundation of their system of infidelity. They draw their conclusions from the premises laid down, which is a just mode of reasoning ; the premises laid down by the Calvinists are, a certain, unoriginated knowledge of all future events and things. It could not be known to be certain, unless it was fixed in the Divine mind, and if it existed in the Divine mind *eternally*, then it was never created. Calvinism teaches that God knew *eternally*, that there would be human beings, and that he would make laws to govern them, and that the Bible contains those laws ; but he knew certainly that they would transgress those laws and be damned. But the Deist arises in abhorrence of such doctrine, and cries out, No !— God's goodness governs him if he is governed at all, not his prescience ; though we believe he is all-wise, and knows all things, we don't believe God will condemn his creatures for doing what he knew eternally they would most certainly do, and what he could not prevent. No, your notion of the moral government of God is wrong, all wrong ; we believe that whatever is, is right. We believe that all events and things were eternally as certain in the mind of God as they ever can be ; yea, the certainty of the events were so fixed in the mind of God, that he could not prevent them, and they are all right. Therefore,

your Bible laws is all priestcraft to frighten weak minds. Everything existed in the mind of God, eternally; there was nothing created. Thus argues the Deist. Thus his conclusions are drawn from the premises laid down, that knowledge implies existence, and if God knew certainly all the events and product of all human hearts, and that knowledge was unoriginated, materialism is then evidently implied in such a theory.

CHAPTER XIX.

That the Divine omniscience must include a perfect knowledge of all abstract possibilities, we are ready to admit, and we are as ready to acknowledge that the Deity must know, not only all that is possible to be done, both by himself and by every other being; because such a knowledge is inseparable from that Divinity that is unoriginated. But although his knowledge of what is possible be itself necessary and underived, yet the *certain knowledge* of finite acts and things themselves, can only be co-evil and co-existent with these facts in existence. It is a fact, that in relation to the Jews, "in causing their sons and daughters to pass through the fire to Moloch," the Lord does most emphatically declare, "it did not even come into his mind, that they *should* ever commit such abominable idolatries."—Jer. 32—35.

It is evident from the holy Scriptures, that the present fallen state of human beings is what the infinite mind of God had not with certainty anticipated; and, indeed, it would have been a moral impossibility for a being of infinite benevolence to have created the human race under such an anticipation, and have remained benevolent. It is written in the Bible, "God

saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth; and it repented the Lord that he had made man upon the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." Gen. vi. 5—6. It is evident that the Lord acted upon the dictates of this repentance, and destroyed all the inhabitants of this earth, excepting only Noah and his family. Agreeable to this doctrine are the words of our Lord, of his betrayer. Matt. 26—27, "It had been good for that man if he had never been born." And how much more truly might the same be said of any being, who should be born under a certain prescience of eternal misery? But of a being whose final misery is only possible, and his final happiness has many more possibilities for happiness than for misery, it can never be said of him while under such circumstances, and faithful to his trust, "that he had better not to have been born." And to infer that the creation of such a being could have been a blunder in the Divine economy, although he should be unfaithful to his trust, would be about as correct an inference, as that the abuse of God's mercies by our own voluntary wickedness would imply any just reflection upon the character of that gracious being by whom they had been bestowed.

On the subject of opposite possibilities, it aught always to be kept in mind, that although two opposite propositions may both be abstractedly possible, they may not be equally feasible. Thus, it is possible for any human being, that enjoys freedom in moral action, to be saved, and it is possible for any such human being to perish; but these two possibilities

are not equally feasible. The motives on one side are greater than those on the other; the agency on the side of salvation, outnumbers those on the other side, as far as may consist with moral liberty, and a single possibility of ultimate failure. Therefore, there is a large overbalance of motive on the side of salvation; yet notwithstanding, any incorrigible sinner may possibly remain finally impenitent.

On the subject of possibilities, one author says, "Every supposable thing, the actual production of which would not involve any real contradiction, either physical, mental, or moral, must, in itself, be abstractedly possible; but, on the contrary, it is equally plain, that every supposable thing, the actual production of which would involve any real contradiction, cannot be in itself even abstractedly possible, but must be absolutely and eternally impossible.

"That abstract possibility itself must have definable bounds and immutable limits, beyond which it cannot pass; and that there are supposable things which the power of an infinite Being could never be able to bring into actual existence, is a clear, and palpable, and intuitive truth. And thus it will appear that the human imagination is able to produce imaginary associations, which no power in earth or heaven is able to associate in fast and actual existence. The human fancy can associate happiness with impiety toward God. It can presume on final happiness, after a life of incorrigible rebellion, and final impenitence. It can believe that this material world had no immaterial and eternal creator; it can believe that a

future event may be the object of a certain anticipation, while the real, and actual existence of that event is perfectly fortuitous ; it can believe a thousand other things, that are equally supposable to the human imagination, but would be equally contradictory.

" In relation to the existence of opposite possibilities, it may be argued that before the creation of this world had taken place, it was abstractedly possible for such a world as this to be created, and it was equally possible that such a world as this might never be created ; but its creation, and its non-creation are perfectly incapable of co-existence, and therefore, since this world has been created, it is no longer possible that such a world as this may not be created.

" The sophism which would argue an actual certainty from an abstract possibility, may claim a moment's notice in this place. It has been speciously argued, that since the reader is now actually perusing what I have written, it was therefore certain from all eternity, that at the present moment he would be so employed. It does not much excite our wonder, when we hear illiterate people talking away in such a random manner ; but it is, I confess, more than marvelous, to hear grave and learned doctors propound such a sophistical proposition in the name of argument. If a person would only distinguish between abstract possibility and actual existence, the case would be perfectly intelligible. It would then stand as follows :—since my reader is now actually perusing what I have written, it was always possible that at this present time he might be so employed ;

but it was, prior to the present moment, equally possible that at this time he might not be so employed ; up to the present time, both alternatives of the possibility were equally possible ; but since my reader is now actually perusing the productions of my pen, it now is no longer possible that at the present moment he may not be so employed, for by the actual transpiration of the positive possibility, the negation therefore has been actually annihilated.

" Here, then, we come to the final conclusion, which is, that between the alternatives of abstract possibilities, there is always to be found a mental, or a moral, or a physical contingency ; since both the negative and positive alternations are equally capable of being brought into actual existence, and each of them is just as capable as the other of being completely destroyed by the actual transpiration of the opposite alternative. It is possible I may be eternally saved ; such are the advantages of my probationary state, and such are its awful responsibilities, that it is equally possible I may be eternally lost ; and between this appalling alternative, there lies a momentous contingency which will continue to hang in fearful suspense over the issue of my life, until my happiness or misery shall render one of these possibilities an everlasting reality, and annihilate the other possibility for ever and ever. But until one of these events shall actually transpire, the issue of my life will be as much a contingency to the infinite mind of God, as to the narrow intelligence of my own finite understanding. Contingencies are identified with all

moral agency, whether created or uncreated, and every attempt to subject them to the rules of rigid certainty, or reduce them to the regular proportions of physical causes and effect, would be nothing better than an outrage on human liberty, and a libel on the moral government of God."

On reading these extracts, I concluded that the Divine Omniscience was clearly vindicated, without confounding it with predestination. But another difficulty was, to understand the arguments of the anti-predestinarians in their laboring to prove a *certain knowledge of an event, that was in fact a contingency*. I had embraced the doctrine, that God knew all events and things; if an event was certain, God knew it was certain, if it was contingent, God knew it was contingent. Also, I had embraced the doctrine that God knew all possibilities, and if they only meant by certain knowledge to know all that can possibly be done by God himself, and all that his creatures can possibly do, though all has never been done, that might have been done; in this sense, the word certain knowledge, would not have militated against the free agency of God, nor the moral agency of human beings. But to know an event to be certain, and that same event to be contingent, appeared to me to be a contradiction, or a confusion of language. But one author, in defending the certain knowledge of an event that he allows to be contingent, says—

"The great fallacy in the argument, that the certain prescience of a moral action destroys its contingent nature, lies in supposing that *contingency* and *certainty* are the opposites of each other. It is, perhaps, unfortunate that a word which is of figurative etymology, and which consequently can only have an ideal application to such subjects, should have grown into common use in this discussion, because it is more liable on that account, to present itself to different minds under different shades of meaning. If however, the term *contingent* in this controversy, has any definite meaning *at all*, as applied to the moral actions of men, it must mean their *freedom*, and stands opposed *not* to certainty, but to necessity. A free action is a voluntary one; and an action which results from the choice of the agent, is distinguished from a necessary one, in this, that it might not have been, or have been otherwise, according to the self-determining power of the agent. It is with reference to this specific quality of a free action, that the term contingency is used; *it might have been otherwise*, in other words, it was not necessitated. Contingency in moral actions, is, therefore, their freedom, and is opposed *not* to *certainty*, but to *necessity*. The very nature of this controversy fixes this as the precise meaning of the term. The question is not, in point of fact, about the certainty of moral actions, that is, whether they *will* happen or not. Those who advocate this theory, care not about the *certainty* of actions, simply considered, that is, whether they will take place or not; the reason why they object to a certain prescience of moral action is, that they conclude, that such a prescience renders them *necessary*.

It is the *quality* of the action for which they contend, not whether it will happen or not. If contingency meant *uncertainty*, the sense in which such theorists take it, *the dispute would be at an end.*"

On reading this, I paused to consider it; "*the dispute would be at an end;*" so then, the whole dispute turns on the definition of the word contingent; I then began to analyze the subject. Our author says, 1st. "*It is perhaps, unfortunate.*" Well, "*perhaps*" and "*unfortunate*" both imply contingency. 2d. "*That a word of figurative etymology.*" Why, all words are figures of speech. But, 3d. "*If, however, the term contingent has any definite meaning at all.*" Is there a doubt of its meaning? The dictionary defines it to mean any thing falling out by *chance*, or any thing in the hands of chance. Is not *chance* an uncertain thing? But, 4th, our author says, "*it means their freedom, and stands opposed to necessity, and not to certainty.*" Again, our dictionary tells us that certainty means exemption from doubt, that which is real and fixed. "Freedom agrees with contingency," they say, but how does certainty agree with freedom? Necessity and certainty agree well together. For we apply the term *necessity* to any thing which cannot be avoided; and we apply the term *certainty* to anything that will infallibly take place; we regard necessity as being applicable to causation, and we regard *certainty* as being applicable to issue; we say of anything which is necessary, that it must be; and we say of any thing which is

certain, that it will be. So that there is only a philological difference in the terms.

But our author, in another place, quotes the Scripture: "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world," he adds, "or rather from all eternity." If from all eternity, we must consider the knowledge of God as unoriginated as God himself. Eternity has no beginning. When we say God's knowledge, or his decrees, or his acts, we understand something that originated from him, and not a something that is unoriginated; for none but God is unoriginated, none but God is absolutely Divine or eternal. The Calvinists talk of eternal decrees, as though a decree was unoriginated, and not an act of him who alone is the only unoriginated being that existed before his acts. They might as well talk of an eternal creation, and so rob the Deity of the glory of his works.

But, inasmuch as some words are considered by some of figurative etymology; it may be proper to define my meaning of the words wisdom and knowledge more particularly. I have said, wisdom was essential to the Divine existence, but the knowledge of any thing beyond his own hypostasis was not essential to his existence. I consider wisdom a power to judge rightly, or to perceive. But knowledge is a perception of what is, or may be. The Divine Being can exist without the existence of his creatures; but he could not exist without wisdom. These figures of speech, I hope, will be profitable to the reader.

The advocates for eternal prescience, refer to the predictions of our Lord, concerning the destruction

of Jerusalem by the Romans. This, one author says, "was predicted most circumstantially?" But all the circumstances in the case, they have not noticed. Our Lord, in reference to the time, says, "of that day and that hour, knoweth no man, no, not the angels, neither the Son, but the Father only." They say the Father knew. If the Father knew, and the Son did not, then the son was not Divine. "Ah!" they said, "he knew as God, but he did not know as man." No, sir, not so; Christ never calls himself the Son of God, without meaning his Divinity. The true sense of this passage is this, it was with the Father to fix the day and hour, and he had not fixed it. "Oh," they would say, "yes he had." Well, if he had fixed the day and hour, and had not shown it to the Son, then this text cannot be true, which says, "The Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth."—John 5: 20. He had not showed this to him. It was evident that great trouble and distress would attend the destruction of that city; therefore our Lord said, "Except those days be shortened, no *flesh* (that is no human life) can be saved; but for the *elect* sake he will shorten the days." Now, I ask, which time, did even the Father know certain, the final event would take place—the longest time, or the shortest time? And here I would remark, that the prophecies in the Scriptures were not designed to prove an eternal prescience, but to demonstrate the infinite agency of God, in the government of the world. Why do we pray for blessings? If all is certain, as the Calvinists hold it to be, our prayers won't

alter it; we have no encouragement, no ground for our faith. The Deists don't pray, because they also believe that all things are as certain as the throne of God, or as their own existence; they have no faith in prayer.

Why is it, that none of those who advocate both certainty and contingency, have not marked a distinction between them, is to me very surprising; as it was men of great classical science that wrote. I thought Dr. A. Clarke would mark the distinction. But alas! I was astonished, that after allowing that "God was an infinite free agent," he solves all into an "ETERNAL NOW." And concludes that "God lives in all past eternity, and in all future eternity the same, at the same time." He therefore knows most certainly, all the past events, and he must know as certainly, all the future events; this is called *unsuccessive* existence. Therefore, this is allowing all that is contended for by the advocates of eternal prescience. All events, past, present and to come, are as certain as *now*.

In paying particular attention to this notion of eternal NOW, I perceived it involved the same doctrine, of those that contended for a certain prescience of an event that was in fact contingent, and that there can be no such thing as foreknowledge in the Divine Being, nor afterknowledge. It is all present knowledge. I thought my labor to explain this subject of foreknowledge would not be clear and plain, unless I refuted this notion of an eternal NOW. And if I have succeeded to make it plain to the reader, I hope it

will be an everlasting quiescence to the notion that confounds certainty with contingency.

Those who advocate the notion of *eternal now*, pretend to say that the difference between time and eternity is that which lies between successive and unsuccessive existence. As it has been strangely conceived, that as an infinite being must occupy at once all the infinitude of unbounded expansion, so an *eternal* being must occupy at once, and in one indivisible point of duration, all the infinite continuity of an eternal existence. Whereas, every person's common sense would tell him, that all which possibly can be implied in an infinite and eternal existence, may be easily expressed, in these intelligible words, "*Living every where at once, and living every where forever.*" But to talk of living always and every where in one individual point of present duration, which is the notion of unsuccessive existence, is to talk unintelligibly, and to assert what no man living is able either to explain or understand.

Space is measurable, and so is duration; that is to say, all finite quantities are measurable, both of space and duration. But measurable quantities are reducable to an indivisible point, either of space or duration; and much less would it be possible to compress an inaugmentable quantity into an indivisible quantity, either of space or duration, either of extension or continuance of being. And yet the notion of unsuccessive existence in the Deity, involves these, and many other contradictions equally obvious and equally absurd. A cubic foot is a real part of the Divine

eternity, and a single hour is a real part of the Divine eternity, and the person who would be able to annihilate the space occupied by a single cubic foot, or the duration of one hour, would be able to annihilate the Deity himself. Parts of infinite duration, and infinite expansion are obviously real, and for this plain reason, that if they were but deducted from the whole sum, the remainder would be less than infinite, and yet no numerical collection of finite quantities, would amount to an infinite sum.

The most imposing form in which the notion of unsuccesive existence has been proposed, is the following: "Eternal existence, they say, must exclude both beginning and end, and consequently there can be no first, and no second, and no third." But why do they not add, and so on "*ad infinitum?*" This argument has been received with such implicit submission, and has been rendered so popular, that its advocates are quite astonished to hear its validity called in question. It is true, where there is no beginning of existence there can be no first existence; and yet we are perfectly certain, that the actions of an infinite being, must admit of a numerical augmentation, or otherwise there would be an end to his actions, and consequently to his being. Unoriginated existence precludes the bounds of number, but it cannot preclude the order of succession; we are certain that existence cannot be stationary, that it must be successive, and for these reasons, the flow of existence must be uniform and unceasing, and that cannot remain for two successive moments the same. And

although it cannot be said of any act performed by an eternal being, that it stands in an ordinal relation to the first act, yet it must stand in an ordinal relation to the act that went before it, and to the act that may follow after it, in the conduct of God.

The erroneous notion of an *eternal now*, arises from not distinguishing between the eternal necessity and stability of the Divine conduct. Action implies existence, and successive acts implies successive existence. But confounding indefinite with inaugmentable quantities, the mind is betrayed into the most egregious blunders. The quantity of the past existence of the Deity is infinite and inaugmentable, because it is unoriginated, but it is not for that reason infinite in quantity and therefore inaugmentable ; for although its present aggregation is immeasurable, yet it must admit of augmentation, world without end ! One of the best conceptions which we are able to form of the eternity of the Divine existence is that which is suggested to us by the Psalmist in these words, " Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations," and therefore the Deity must have existed along with all those successive generations. Again, he says, " from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." No words could possibly convey a more clear and decided conception of progressive existence, than these words, " from everlasting to everlasting."

Those who advocate the notion of *eternal now*, pretend to say that the difference between time and

eternity is that which lies between successive and unsuccessive existence. I would ask such persons whether they really mean by the word *successive*, any thing else than *continued* existence ? For my part, I employ these terms as being synonymous. And therefore I attribute it alike to finite and infinite existence. The Greek word *eonion* translated *everlasting*, signifies continued, or any thing that is continued, the Greeks call *eonion*. A preacher of Universalism challenged me to produce one text in the Bible that demonstrated an interminable punishment of the wicked. I quoted these words, " They shall be punished with everlasting destruction." " Ah ! sir," said he, " the Greek word translated everlasting is *eonion*." I asked if the Greeks did not have a signification to their words ? and if the word *eonion* did not signify any thing *continued?* He allowed it did. I then asked him to explain to me when *continued* punishment would end ? He declined an answer. So I think those will do who advocate *eternal now*, by pretending to unsuccessive existence.

But even if the point of unsuccessive existence in the Deity were fully ceded to the advocates of an inaugmentable knowledge, they would still have a formidable difficulty to get over, before they would fairly establish their doctrine. They must not only prove their assertion of unsuccessive existence in the Deity, but they must prove that every other being exists alike in the past, the present, and the future,

and that the Divine knowledge is like himself, the subject of an unoriginated and unlimited existence. Before the Deity could have a present knowledge of my future existence, I myself must have an actual existence, and a present existence in the future. If all eternity, as they are pleased to say, is now present to him, then of course all eternity must have a present existence. Thus it appears that the doctrine of eternal *now*, like the doctrine of a certain knowledge of a contingent event, must be equally applied to all existence, created and uncreated, and to all occurrences, past, present, and to come; and therefore the following alternative must await the abettors of these theories, and upon one of the horns of this formidable dilemma, they must eventually be transfixed. Either they must deny a continuance of existence, and also deny that actual existence is essential to a certain knowledge; or else they must believe that all existence, both past, present, and to come, possesses an unoriginated, unchangeable, and everlasting being.

The following Scripture has been quoted for the purpose of supporting the notion of unsuccessive existence, and also for supporting a certain prescience of contingent events; but how adapted it is to such purposes, we shall know hereafter. The Apostle speaks of the "faith of Abraham before God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things that are not, as though they were."—Rom. 4: 17. Now if the Scripture had affirmed in plain words, that God actually maketh things to be, and not to be, at the

same time, it might indeed have been a fortunate testimony for the doctrine of an inaugmentable knowledge in the Deity; but since it only says, the Deity speaks of future events, as though they had actually transpired, the theory of unsuccessive existence falls to the ground; for although the Deity, in all absolute prophecy, speaks of future events, which he has decreed should take place, as though they had actually transpired; yet he does not, by such predictions, give a present existence to those predicted events, neither does he affirm in those predictions that such events had actually transpired, but being the objects of an absolute decree, they therefore become the objects of certainty, and may be spoken of and acted upon with as much confidence by human beings, as things may be spoken of and acted upon which have already taken place.

To talk of an act that has no real existence, neither was it decreed of God that such an act should exist, is to talk of nothing. If it had have been decreed, it would have had a seminal existence. But to talk of a certain foreknowledge of a future event, that is not decreed, is to talk of an event that has no cause of existence; it may be, and it may not be, therefore it is uncertain—as they acknowledge that a contingent act "is one that may be, or may not be." And to clear the subject from any necessity of a certain act, they represent man as possessing freedom to act, and this "freedom stands opposed to necessity but not to certainty." Truly, a well made clock possesses freedom to run, and the maker of it may know certain

that it will strike every hour; and that it will not strike twelve when it strikes one.

This eternal prescience, after all, is nothing but *fate* in disguise. How shall I form an argument to prove there was no want of wisdom, and goodness, or power in the Divine Being, in creating men that he foreknew certainly and eternally would be miserable, and he could not prevent it? And how can any wonder that the Deists, and Universalists, who thus believe in a certain prescience, should deny all future punishment of sinners?

The advocates of eternal prescience, apart from predestination, are far more inconsistent than their predestinarian brethren. They believe in the anticipated certainty of the issue of human life, and maintain it with as great tenacity as any fatalists on earth can possibly do; and therefore, they have not only got the formidable task of reconciling the certainty of the issue with the righteous government of God, but they have a task which is equally formidable, that is, of reconciling the certain issue of life with the freedom of man. And thus we see, the advocates of eternal prescience are brought within as perplexing a dilemma as the abettors of predestination, and upon either one or other of its horns they must be transfixed; and I call upon them as ingenious and honest men, either to reject their notion of a certain prescience of a contingent event, or to renounce the doctrine of human liberty.

After arranging the above arguments, I was better

satisfied in my own mind, on the all-important subject of the Divine foreknowledge, than I had ever been; I considered that the infinite free agency of God, in the government of the world, was better vindicated by these arguments, than by any other that had been introduced; and also, the moral agency of man was better established. I often had to contend for the free agency of God, against the doctrines of fate, held by the Calvinists, Universalists, and Deists. I sometimes said to them, when they appealed to foreknowledge to strengthen their argument, "God knows just what he has a mind to know, and what he has not a mind to know, he lets alone. And he does just what he has a mind to do, and what he has not a mind to do, he does not do it." Some would start at this, and cry out, "why, God knows all things!" "O yes, God knows all things, and more too." "O no! not more than all things." "Yes, sir, all things is made up of parts, and all the parts make the whole, thereby you set bounds to his knowledge. Creation and providence are all things, beyond that is immensity, that precludes the bounds of number; God knows this and that too. God knows all the particles that compose this vast creation, and can number them as he numbers the hairs of our head; but he does not know one particle to exist, more than does exist; yet he might make four or five more and tuck them in if he chose to, and then he would know there was more than he knew before. Who will set bounds to the *omnipotence* of God? Yet there are some things that he cannot do. He cannot lie; he cannot make

a triangular circle. It no more derogates from the *omniscience* of God, to say he cannot know nothing to be something, or a lie to be the truth, than it derogates from his omnipotence to say he cannot lie."

CHAPTER XX.

After three years in a superannuated relation, I had gained such a degree of strength of lungs, that I thought I could supply an easy circuit. I therefore wrote to the Bishop, stated my case to him, and named five circuits, either of which I thought I could supply. But I was not favored with either, for at the close of the Conference, I received my appointment to Petersburgh circuit, where I had seventeen appointments every two weeks; this was a severe trial to my faith, therefore I concluded I must favor my self. So I went on, and informed the people that I should come to them once in two weeks. They were all willing, and seemed pleased that I could preach as often as that; two local preachers volunteered to aid me, so we made a four weeks' circuit of it, and the Lord poured out his spirit upon us, and the work increased to such a degree that we had to employ another preacher before the year was out.

When the presiding elder came to my first quarterly meeting, I asked him who was the cause of my appointment to this circuit, and why the Bishop had not egarded my request. He said, "I was the cause, for

the friends on this circuit urged me to have you appointed here. I knew the circuit was at a low ebb, and if any one could raise it up it would be you, and I believe I acted for the good of the cause." "That may be, but I doubt whether it will be for my good. I have been sick for three years, and now scarcely able to preach three times a week, much less seventeen times in two weeks ; besides, I am in debt, and my recent sickness has much increased my debts.—This circuit cannot afford me half the Conference allowance, so I see nothing but distress and privation before me. I have made a four weeks' circuit of it, and the friends are well satisfied." "Well," said he, "go on, we will do the best we can for you." We did so, and I found much to be thankful for—about eighty professed to be converted, and we had about sixty net increase that year ; so the circuit prospered, and has been increasing since, so that now they have five preachers to supply them, and pay each of them double to what they paid me.

The next year I was stationed with brother P. Cook, on Salisbury circuit. This was a prosperous and pleasant circuit. Here we got our quarterage in full, which was the first time I had ever got it on a circuit; this helped me some out of debt, as I was enabled to pay a little more than the interest. We had a good revival of religion, and good fellowship among the brethren. The next year I had brother N. Bigelow for my colleague ; he had the charge, and we had prosperous times, both spiritually and temporally. On this circuit, sister Church, and sister Brinsmade, proposed, that as I was then owing $900, that ninety of the brethren and sisters should each give $10, and so clear me from debt. They came short of it. However, they succeeded to raise $332, and I saved $80; so that I paid near $400 besides the interest. This was a great help to me. But my health declined, I had many turns of bleeding from the lungs, which weakened me so that when I had done preaching, I was not able to meet class. This was a great grief to me.

The next year I was stationed on Tyringham circuit. Here also I had to preach three times on the Sabbath, which so increased my disease, and I bled so frequently, that I was laid up for several weeks, and disappointed my congregations. This also was a great grief to me.

At this time my son Freeborn was called to preach, and had attended some of my appointments when I was sick. The presiding elder wanted him on the Pittsfield circuit. I knew not how to spare him. He was then seventeen years old, and the only son I had to work on the farm, and be company for his mother.

I said to the presiding elder, "if you take him, you will deprive me of his services on the farm, which I can now illy afford, as I am unable to hire a man to supply his place. But before I give my full consent, my wife must be consulted, and her consent obtained, forasmuch as she has suffered by my being so much from home in her younger days, and as he is the only son I have left to be with her in her old age,

I cannot think of leaving her alone as I have done." He said, "that's right, she ought to be consulted." I mentioned this request to her, and after a long and serious consideration, she said, "Well, he must go." "Why, how can you spare him?" "Well, how did I spare you, thirty years ago?" "Why, then you were young, and the children were with you, but now you will be left alone and unprotected, and I am fearful you will suffer as you have done heretofore—your age, too, demands society and assistance." "Well," said she, "it is evident that the Lord calls him to preach, as much so as that he called you, and we must not oppose the Lord. No, no, we must not oppose the Lord." "But," said I, "how are we to equip him for the work, or even furnish him with a horse? We have but two; I require one, and if the other is taken how can we get the corn ploughed out? and if he goes too, how shall we even get the corn hoed? I am not able to pay a hired man." "Well," she replied, "I don't know now how it will be, or how we shall get along, but we must trust the Lord—he has been to us a sure help in time of need, and his promises have never failed us." So she not only consented, but urged his departure for the work of the ministry.

Freeborn thought that he could work on the farm, on his rest days, sufficient to secure the fall crops, but his rest days were rainy days, or devoted to the studies of his calling. So the corn got neglected, and we lost the crop.

He travelled the circuit for three months, and received $17. This was poor pay for the loss of the corn and other fall crops—besides, my own receipts were much diminished from what they were on the circuits in Connecticut, and I said, "this will not do, I preach for half pay, because the friends on my circuit are not able to contribute more, yet I do not complain of my short allowance; but I do not see how I can afford to supply another circuit on the same terms. So Freeborn came home.

About this time he was very desirous to get to the Wilbraham School, for the purpose of perfecting his studies, and particularly in *Greek* and *Hebrew*. This could not be done, as I was not able to bear the expense. I therefore advised him to carefully study Fletcher's works, Reid, on the Mind, Watson's Theology, Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, and Wesley's works; these to be read through in course, three times, and carefully noted. He acceded to my plan, and from October to May, devoted his attention principally to these authors, and at the Conference of that year, was received on trial.

In thus giving up my son at the age of seventeen, we were depriving ourselves of much of the comforts of his society, independent of the value of his services on the farm. Four years of his services, at that time, and at his age, was a matter of no small moment to us, but the vineyard of the Lord had need of more laborers.

Our beloved sister Garrettson wrote me word about this time, that she would give $100, if Freeborn was received by the Conference. This provided him

with a horse, saddle and bridle, and $5 over, to pay his expenses to his circuit. This supply was a timely relief to me, for which I thanked God, and sister Garrettson.

My health declined. The inflammation of my lungs increased to that degree, as to deprive me of speech. I therefore, again, asked for a superannuated relation. I had served the Church over thirty years, and during that time, never disappointed a congregation, except from sickness, or causes beyond my control.

I now employed my time in preaching as often as my health would permit, and writing for the good of others.

When I travelled on Petersburgh circuit, I had many pleasant seasons with some Baptist ministers, as well as with my Methodist friends. Some of those Baptists were not only pious, but well informed in the essential doctrines of the Gospel. Elder Lealand, and elder Hull, I was most acquainted with. Elder Hull was a very pious clergyman, and of good information, in all the essential doctrines of the Gospel and ordinances, except baptism, its mode and the subjects of baptism; that I thought him deficient in. He would often introduce the doctrine of infant baptism, and desire me to defend it. I would say, "O, brother Hull, you had better not talk with me on that subject, nor on the mode of baptism, for if you do, I shall certainly convert you." I added, "some make too much of baptism, and some make too little of it. I never thought baptism was essential to salvation. It

is only essential to church membership; and as I never thought that the weakness of any man's head would hurt the goodness of his heart, therefore, a little difference of opinion, in what is not essential to salvation, ought never to mar or disturb Christian fellowship." This pleasantry put off a conversation on that subject several times, as I often called to see him. At last he said, "I fear you will go off the circuit, and you won't convert me." "O, now, brother Hull, if you will be converted, don't blame me for it, for if we converse on that subject, I shall certainly convert you, because you are a candid man, to yield to the weight of argument, and the force of truth. And as I shall take you in a way you never thought of before, you will yield to the truth of it." "Well, I want to hear it." "Well, then, in the first place, you believe that all children that die in infancy, go to hell." "No, I don't." "Ah! I thought you would deny it, because it is not so expressed in your articles of faith. But it is implied; you don't baptize infants, because you say they are not believers." "Yes, that is correct." "Well, then, they must be damned, for our Lord saith, 'He that believeth, shall be saved, and he that believeth not, shall be damned.'" "O," said he, "that was not spoken of infant children; neither was it spoken of women, for it is in the masculine gender, *he*, so women can go to heaven without faith as well as infant children." "Well, but," said he, "do you think infant children are believers?" "In our Lord's account of them, they were, but in your account of them they are not,

so you and our Lord don't agree." "Well, but, sir, have you any Scripture to warrant your assertion?" "Yes, if you please to look at the 18th chapter of Matthew, and see if I read right, 'At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, who shall be greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' Now if we don't get into heaven, we cannot be great there. But we'll read on, 'Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is great in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones that believeth in me.'" At this word, "believe in me," I stopped repeating, and as he looked over, he replied, "O, that child meant a young convert." "Well, then, let us read it so as to suit your young convert. 'At that time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying. who shall be greatest in the kingdom of heaven,' and he took a young convert, a man about six feet high, and placed him in the midst, and said, 'you, my disciples, have been converted too long to go to heaven, and you have too much religion to go there, you must have but a little, like this child.'" "O," said he, "that won't do." "Then the adverb little, must apply to an infant, or a very small child, that was distinct from an adult."

After a short pause, he said, "But how can they

believe on him of whom they have not heard, and how can they hear without a preacher." "Well, sir, that is the text I wanted you to bring forward. Now, sir, please to look down to the 10th verse, and see if I quote it right: 'Take heed, that ye despise not one of these little ones,' this I will apply to you, brother Hull, take heed that you think not light of the rights and privileges of little children, 'for I say unto you, that in heaven *their* angels do always behold the face of my father.' How is that word spelt, t-h-e-r-e, there in that place, or t-h-e-i-r, theirs." "Well, really, it is t-h-e-i-r, but I never noticed it before. Then it means the angels of these little children." "Angels are ministering spirits, sent forth of God, to minister to those that shall be heirs of salvation,' as the apostle saith. Why, sir, the guardian angels know how to preach Christ to a little child, and the child knows how to understand the angel better than you and I do.'

God has provided means for the salvation of little children. Angels are their guardians and teachers, and watch over them. If parents die, the civil authority appoints guardians over their children, to take care of the property that is left them; and though the child don't know the value of property, neither can he sue you for taking it from him, yet his guardian can. So, if you deprive a child of his spiritual privilege, the guardian angel will accuse you to the father. Children were inducted into the church at eight days old, by circumcision, under the law, and we have no account in the New Testament, of their being deprived

of church membership, and children could no more understand the typical meaning of circumcision, or of purification under the law, than they now can under the Gospel, as taught by man; and, if God did make it the duty of parents to devote their children to the Lord, under the law of Moses, in the ordinances of that dispensation, can we reasonably suppose they would be deprived of church membership without as plain a command to forbid parents to devote their children to God in the ordinance of the Gospel? Peter said, "repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins." Then he gives us the reason why they should be baptized, viz., "For the promise," he says, "is to you and to your children." If there was no promise of God's blessing to us, in attending his ordinances, there would be no reason in being baptized. But as baptism is one of the prerequisites to the forgiveness of sins, as we see expressed in Acts 22 : 16, the remission of sins is not necessarily a prerequisite to baptism. Here you will see your mistake in putting conversion before baptism, and as angels are guardians of little children, they will accuse you with depriving them of their spiritual rights. Besides, if they are the legal members of the church, they enjoy the prayers of the church, and certainly the prayers of the church are worth something.

Moreover, you make too much of the mode of baptism. Immersion is not commanded as the mode; indeed, there is no command in the New Testament for any mode. Neither does the Greek word *Bapto*,

or *Baptizo*, signify only immersion. It signifies also, to wash—to purify—to sprinkle—to wet—to stain—as it is said, "I will stain," or baptize, "all my raiment."—Isaiah 63 : 3. The "washing," or baptizing "cups," or divers washings, in Hebrew 9 : 10, and also sprinkling, as in the 19th verse. So you see, the definition of a word does not amount to a command, unless the thing signified is commanded definitely. In John 3 : 25, it is said, "Then there arose a question between the Jews and some of John's disciples, about purifying; and they came unto John, and said, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, the same baptizeth, &c." Now, this question was about baptizing, which was called in the law, purifying. So then purification under the law, was John's baptism; and John decided that Christ would increase, or would rather regulate the ordinance. So he did, by commanding his disciples to "baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." But not a word about the mode in which water was to be used in purifying different from under the law. And that ordinance was first commenced when God said to Moses, Exodus 19 : 10, "Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow." This was to prepare them to wait on the Lord, who said he would come down, on Mount Sinia, and speak unto them. This ordinance sanctified, or prepared the people to wait on God, and receive his law. So John's baptism prepared the way of the Lord, or prepared the people to wait on Christ, and hear his gospel. John was under the law, and administered the

ordinances of the law; so also, was Christ under the law, and kept the law. When, therefore, Christ came to John, to be consecrated high priest, or to be baptized of him, John knew Jesus, though he did not know that Jesus was the Messiah that was looked for, but he knew him to be a prophet, and a very holy man, therefore he said, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" Jesus said, "it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness," which is the same as if he had have said, "it becometh us to keep the law." And this baptism of Christ was a consecrating him into the high priest's office, according to Leviticus, 8th chapter; at least as far as water was used in the ceremony of consecration. The purifying with blood was not necessary, because Christ was not a sinner, neither was he baptized unto repentance, neither was it necessary to anoint him with oil, as Aaron was, because it was before intimated to John, (that he might know who the Messiah was) that the Holy Ghost would descend upon his head in the shape of a dove, to anoint him. This variation of the mode of consecration, demonstrates that he was a priest after the order of Melchizedek, and not after the order of Aaron.

Purification, consecration, or sanctification, are words that are relative, and to purify, the mode commanded by the Lord, was to sprinkle, either clear water, or blood and water, or water into which they put the ashes of the heifer, as we learn from Numbers, 19th chapter. And that the priest might conveniently purify with blood and water, he was commanded,

Lev. 14, 4th verse, to take cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop, the hyssop being tied on to a cedar staff, with a scarlet thread. This was dipped into water, to sprinkle the unclean, or to purify in any way. There were three things required of a man, to become a legal member of the church, under the law. 1st. circumcision; 2d. purification, and 3d. offering. And for a female, two things were required. 1st. purification; 2d. offering. And if any person was not purified, they were to be cut off from the congregation of the Lord, because the waters of separation were not sprinkled upon him. Therefore, as purification was an essential prerequisite to church membership under the law, so baptism is essential to church membership under the Gospel; and as purification was, by John's disciples and the Jews, confounded with baptism, they understood them to be the same. And, inasmuch as our Lord left the mode of applying the water, without altering it from that practiced by John in purification, we consider sprinkling, as the Scripture mode commanded. John said, "I baptize you *with* water," that is, I apply the water to you, and not you to the water. All the alteration our Lord made in the mode of purifying, or baptizing, was to perform it in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

I also mentioned to him the improbability of John's baptizing by immersion. Seeing all historians agree, even Mr. Robertson, the Baptist historian agrees, that John baptized only six months before Jesus was baptized, and it is written, that all Judea, and they of

Jerusalem, came unto John, and were baptized of him in Jordan, besides those inhabiting the region around about Jordan, that were baptized. There must have been a large number, for Josephus informs us that Herod put John in prison, because he was afraid he would cause a rebellion, for all the people followed him. I think there must have been at least eight million in the whole nation of the Jews at that time. Herod would not havé had just cause of fear unless a majority followed John, but if we say only four million were baptized by him, in six months before Christ was baptized, as it is written, " and when all the people were baptized, then cometh Jesus." If, then, four million were baptized by immersion, he must have baptized more than thirty in a minute, to baptize them in six months, and baptize twelve hours in a day. But he could baptize that number by sprinkling, in less than half the time. Moses consecrated or sanctified six hundred thousand in two days. Exodus 19 : 10. I believe immersion is baptism, when performed by a proper ordained minister, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And if it is not administered in the name of the trinity, it is profane mockery.

This conversation convinced him of the impropriety of making so much of baptism, as some do. I never knew him to speak against infant baptism while he lived, afterward. And many years after we were very intimate. He lived a Christian life, and died happy.

There are some tenets in religion, or some form,

that distinguishes one denomination from another. The Episcopal Church are fond of power, arising from their notion of a succession of Bishops. The Presbyterians are fond of Calvinian decrees. The Baptists of immersion for baptism. The Methodists for holiness. Many among these denominations, are so weak in intellect that they believe their peculiar notions are essential to salvation. Though if the Methodists do believe holiness to be essential to salvation, it cannot be from weakness of intellect. Besides, if they enjoy what they believe, they will have less bigotry, and a better foundation for charity, than the others have from their notions. This doctrine of holiness I embraced with a clear conviction that it was scriptural, and the privilege of all true believers. " Be ye holy, saith the Lord, for I your God am holy." When I first embraced the doctrines of Methodism, I was animated with a hope, that by the time I was an old man, if I should live, I should be strong in faith, and not weak, as I then was. But though fifty years have passed by, I still feel myself to be a child, weak, and wholly dependant on the Lord. What good I have been instrumental of doing, appears as nothing. Past blessings are as nothing to supply my present wants. I am now as dependant on God, as ever I was. My confidence is in God alone, through the atoning blood of Christ. I think my confidence is stronger than it used to be, otherwise I am a child, weak and feeble, hoping in the Lord.

After travelling Petersburgh, Salisbury, and Tyringham circuits, my health failed. I had so many

turns of bleeding from the lungs, that my voice failed me for some weeks, that I could not speak above my breath; so that again I was superannuated. I had been able to do effective service in the church for a little more than thirty years. Now, weak and feeble, I again returned to my small farm in Canaan, Columbia county. Here I must work or suffer; it was a peculiar trial of my faith. But after some weeks, I could preach once in a week; the brethren proposed to change works with me,—they would plow my ground, and I must plow the fallow ground of the heart, and sow spiritual seed, so we did very well the first year. I preached once in two weeks, and the circuit preacher once in two weeks, thereby we had preaching every Sabbath, and the brethren helped to plow and sow my ground, and mow my grass. But the tax was too heavy on the society in that place. To pay the travelling preachers, was a heavy burden enough, without paying me anything. I then devoted my time to making pills, salve, and tincture, and preach as often as my health would permit, which was about once a week, for which I received nothing, except the profits arising from the sale of my medicine. To do good temporally and spiritually, had ever been my most ardent desire. I attended protracted meetings, in which many were converted.

I had desired to spend a winter in the South, believing it would be a means of healing my lungs. At least so far as to prevent a hemorrhage. But the want of means to pay the expense, prevented, until

I had got my medicine prepared for market. I then took with me, so much of medicine and books, that the profits arising from what I believed I could sell, would pay the expense. In the summer, I went to Boston, and in December I started for the South. But the winter came on before I reached Philadelphia. I tarried there until the river opened in the spring. I then went to Baltimore and Washington, and returned. But it had no good effect to stop the bleeding from the lungs. The next fall, I started in October, and spent the most of the winter in Washington, Georgetown and Alexandria. Toward spring, the bleeding stopped; that I have had none since. Though I do not think it was wholly owing to the climate, yet I believe that it was a great means of relief. Still I find, when I preach too often, or too long, or loud, it brings on an inflammation of the lungs. So I am disabled from doing effective service.

The disputes that have agitated the Church for ages past, has produced many polemical essays. Fletcher's works were the best I ever read. From those and the Scripture, I settled my mind on the seven cardinal doctrines. 1st.—Man's lost estate, by transgression. 2d.—Redemption through the blood of Christ. 3d.—Repentance and faith. 4th.—Justification by faith. 5th.—Sanctification. 6th.—The resurrection of the body. 7th.—A general judgment and rewards and punishment.

These seven doctrines I considered as containing

the whole Gospel, or all that the Gospel requires of us to believe, as essential to salvation.—Other points were theories of speculation, involving metaphysical perplexities.

Religious experience, though related in a simple manner, is more instructive and encouraging than metaphysical subtleties. I wrote some years ago, the experience of a Dutchman, as nearly (as he related it in a love-feast,) as I could, prefacing it as follows :—

The testimonies of our brethren who have tasted that God is merciful and good, as I often heard them in our love-feasts, are not only instructive, but also always animate and cheer my soul. And although some of our Dutch brethren cannot speak English correctly, yet to hear them relate the means of their conversion, as I have heard some, at once evinces their sincerity, and is an evidence of the work of God's grace in their hearts. I wish I could relate one as it was spoken in a love-feast more than thirty years ago, when the Methodists first began to preach in the northern part of the State of New York. I have forgot his name, but the substance of his testimony was as follows. He said, " Mine dear brethren, I want to tell you some mine experience. When de Metodists first came into dese parts, I tot I was doing bery well ; for mine wife and I had two sons, Ned and Jim ; and we had a good farm dat Neddy and I could work bery well, so I let Jim go out to work about fourteen miles off from home. But de Metodists come into our parts, and Neddy went to

dare meeting, and he got converted, and I tot we should all be undone ; so I told Ned he must not go to dese Metodist meetings, for so much praying, and so much going to meeting would ruin us all. But Neddy said, ' O fader, I must serve de Lord and save my soul.' But, I said, you must do de work too. So I gave him a hard stint on de day of dare meeting; but he work so hard dat he got his stint done, and went to de meeting after all. While I set on my stoop and smoked mine pipe, I see him go up over de hill to de Metodist meeting, and I said to my wife Elizabet, we shall be undone, for our Ned will go to dese meetings ; and she said, ' What can we do ?' Well, I said, den I will stint him harder ; and so I did several times when de meeting come. But Neddy worked hard, and sometimes he got some boys to help him, so dat he would go off to de meeting while I set on mine stoop and smoked mine pipe. I could see Ned go over de hill. I said one day, O mine Got, what can I do—dis boy will go to dese meetings after all I can do. So when Ned come home, I said Ned, you must leave off going to dese meetings, or I will send for Jim to come home, and turn you away. But Neddy said, ' O fader, I must serve de Lord, and save my soul.' Well den, I will send for Jim ; so I sent for Jim ; and when he come home, den I heard he had been to de Metodist meeting where he had lived, and he was converted too. And Ned and Jim both said, ' O fader, we must serve de Lord, and save our souls.' But I said to mine wife, dese Meto-

dists must be wrong, da will undo us all, for da have got Ned and Jim both; I wish you would go to dare meeting, and you can see what is wrong; but Ned and Jim can't see it. So de next meeting day de old woman went wid Ned and Jim. But I set on mine stoop, and smoked mine pipe. But I said to mineself, I gess dese Metodists have got dare match, to get de old woman, and she will see what's wrong. So I smoked mine pipe, and lookt to see dem come back. By and by I see dem coming; and when da come near, I see de tears run down mine wife's face. Den I said, O mine Got, da have got de old woman too. I tot I am undone, for da have got Ned, and Jim, and de old woman, and when da come on de stoop, mine wife said, 'O we must not speak against dis people, for da are de people of Got.' But I said noting, for I had not been to any of de meetings, so I was in great trouble. But in a few days after, I heard dat dere was a Presbyterian missionary going to preach a little ways off; so I tot I would go, for I tot it would not hurt any body to go to his meeting; and I went wid Ned and Jim, and mine wife, and he preacht, but dere was noting done till after de meeting was over, and den dar was two young men in de toder room dat sung and prayed so good as any body; and da prayed for dar old fader too. And many cried, and I tot da prayed bery well. After dis I was going out of de door to go home, and a woman said to me, 'Mr. ——, you must be a happy man, to have two such young men as dem dat prayed.' I said, was dat Ned and Jim? She said, 'yes.' O,

I felt so mad to tink da had prayed for me, and exposed me before all de people. But I said noting, but went home, and I went right to bed. But now mine mind was more troubled dan ever before, for I began to tink how wicked I was to stint poor Neddy so hard, and try to hinder him from saving his soul; but I said noting, and mine wife said noting; so I tried to go to sleep; but as soon as I shut mine eyes I could see Neddy going over de hill to go to his meeting, after he had done his hard stint, so tired and weary. Den I felt worse and worse; and by and by I groaned out, and mine wife axt me what's de matter. I said, I believe I am dying. She said, 'Shall I call up Ned and Jim?' I said, yes. And Jim come to de bed, and said, 'O fader, what is de matter?' I said, I believe I am dying. And he said, 'fader, shall I pray for you?' I said, O yes, and Neddy too. And glory be to Got, I believe he heard prayer; for tough I felt my sins like a mountain load to sink me down to hell, I cried, O Got have mercy on me, a poor sinner; and by and by I feel some ting run all over me, and split mine heart all to pieces; and I felt so humble and so loving dat I rejoice and praise Got; and now I am resolved to serve Got wit Ned and Jim, and mine wife, and dese Metodists."

Burning of B. Hibbard's House.—See page 438.

CHAPTER XXI.

After I had commenced printing the second edition of my Memoirs, and while in this city, superintending and editing the same, I received the painful and disheartening intelligence, that my house and home in Canaan, Columbia county, N. Y., was burnt to the ground, together with all its contents, excepting a very few articles, that with much hazard were rescued from the flames.

The fire occurred on Sabbath night, the 24th of September, 1843. I got the news on the 26th, and on the 27th arrived at what was once my home, but now, alas! a mass of smouldering ruins. However, in the midst of all I could but rejoice and give thanks that my dear wife and the other inmates of my house had escaped with their lives; as from the situation of the rooms of the house, and the place where the fire originated, or was kindled by some incendiary, I cannot but view their escape as truly providential.

The fire was first discovered by Mrs. Hows, the wife of Professor J. W. S. Hows, of this city, who had been staying with us for some weeks past, and occupied a bed-room in the south-east corner of the building. At about one or two o'clock she was awak-

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ened by the light of the fire shining into her room: the fire was discovered in the wood-house, situate on the north-east corner of the house, and forming an L with the main building; when first seen, the flames were already curling over the roof of the wood-house, and rapidly approaching the dwelling. She immediately gave the alarm, and aroused the family, consisting at that time of only three persons, besides herself and her little son, viz: my wife, and granddaughter, and Henry Fowler, a young man that assisted on the farm; for this signal service of Mrs. Hows to me and mine on that dreadful night, I am truly thankful. Indeed, I am at a loss for words properly to express my gratitude. Yet I am thankful, and pray our heavenly Father to have her and her dear family always in his holy keeping, and preserve her and them from a similar calamity.

Their first efforts were to subdue the fire; but it had by this time got such headway that all their exertions were unsuccessful; they then turned their attention to saving the furniture, and succeeded by the assistance of the neighbor, S. H. Marks, who by this time had come to the rescue, to save only one bed and one chest of drawers from the back room, and a carpet, some chairs and a looking-glass from another room, and one of Mrs. Hows' trunks of clothing; these formed the bulk of what was saved, leaving the rest of our furniture and beds, all our clothing, bedding, and provisions; together with my library of books, and about two bushels of my manuscripts and writings; many of which I had lately revised, corrected

and laid by, carefully labelled;* and also all my stock of medicines, to the mercy of the devouring element.

We had lived in that house upward of thirty-one years, and had accumulated very many of the comforts, though few of the luxuries of life. My wife was, and is yet, an excellent housekeeper; by her industry and untiring application in spinning and weaving, bleaching and dyeing, and the other qualities of good housewifery, our house was well supplied with beds, bedding, clothing, linen, carpets, and such like articles, the labor of her own hands.

When I take a retrospect of the past, and remember the days of privation and toil we have passed through, and the zeal she has uniformly manifested to promote the cause of religion, at home and abroad, and the cheerfulness amid all her trials with which she would exert herself to support me in the ministry, so that I might continue my labors in the service of the Church; and then, that after half a century of hard work and strict economy, she had been enabled to surround herself and fill her house with all, or nearly all the comforts of life; and when we had hoped to pass the evening of our days in the enjoyment of

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* I had frequently, in conning over and correcting my writings, flattered myself, that they would one day or other, if published, afford some light to the world; but I never thought they would be doomed to support a blaze, and especially the blaze that destroyed my dwelling. But so it is; all the good or harm they ever could have done, is, by this event, for ever prevented. I am now too old to think of ever reproducing them as they were, even if I had the ability for so doing.

those comforts, and so far from being burdensome to the Church, or dependent on any one ; but rather to have it in our power to relieve and encourage the afflicted and the distressed. And now, to realize the fact that all is gone, burned up, and forever dissipated, weighs down my spirits, and makes me sad.

We are growing old ; indeed, we have been growing old for many years past, and this calamity has placed us in a situation we have been for fifty years striving to avoid ; it has reduced us to want, and made us dependent ; but shall I therefore despond, or even distrust the goodness of the Lord ? No, by no means : God forbid. Although in my long life I have never been subjected to so great and so calamitous a pecuniary loss as this is ; yet I am not unacquainted with the flavor of the bitter dregs of the cup of affliction even in these matters. And yet hitherto the Lord has been my shield, my support, and my helper, and brought me out of all my former troubles.

Although I cannot now see how, or from what source my future help and support are to come ; yet I feel confident, that the same Providence that has watched over me, and over the Church, for so many long and prosperous years, will not now forsake us. From this source I draw largely for consolation, and blessed be God, I feel that my reliance shall not be in vain.

When I arrived in Canaan, I was much comforted in the kind sympathies of my neighbors. They not only commiserated with me in my severe loss, but were arranging plans, and devising means to rebuild

my house—they had already supplied my family with the immediate necessaries of life, and in this labor of love, I saw no difference between Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians or Shakers, or those of no denomination ; all seemed ready and anxious to do what they could, and many were grieved that they could not do more.

Such kindness as was manifested by them, and such readiness to assist me, could not but cheer my spirits and inspire me with a hope that all would yet be well. But my Canaan friends are not a rich people ; they are however industrious and prudent, and will do all they can, but my loss is too great for them alone to make good.

It has been quaintly observed by many of my brethren in the ministry, that I am a " good beggar ;" that is, that I am very successful in raising money, and have a rare knack of obtaining supplies. Now I will just remark, that to this charge I shall not now plead, but merely observe, that any poor abilities I do possess in placing a good cause in such a light before a liberal and discerning public, as to secure their patronage and support, has been, and still can be, exerted in the services of the Church ; but cannot be called into action in my own behalf. I have yet to learn how I can thus employ my powers of persuasion ; and I am apprehensive that I am now too old to learn. My wife too, says, " she can yet work, to beg she is ashamed."

My brethren in the ministry, and many of my friends in New York, have expressed their sympathies

for me in language that cannot be misunderstood. Some of the Churches also, have shown theirs in deed and, in truth, and have manifested by their liberal donations, that their sorrow for my loss proceeds from a heart that knows how to feel, and how to manifest their feelings,—their movements and exertions, prompt me to believe that my house will soon be rebuilt, and I shall again have a home for myself and family, and my friends that visit me.

If I possessed the means of rebuilding and refurnishing my house without aid from any one, I should do so without expecting, or even permitting the assistance of my friends or the Church ; but it is far otherwise. At the time of the fire I was doing all in my power to pay my debts—my farm was yet under mortgage, and I was behind hand with the interest, and I had also other debts, to pay which required my every exertion. The admonition of "Owe no man any thing," was constantly in my mind, and I was straining every nerve to fulfil the command by securing the means of paying my debts. Yet, in the midst of all this anxiety and exertion, many thought I was rich, and so expressed their belief. For why they should indulge in this fancy I never could divine, unless it was to add to my excellence in their estimation ; for some do think that riches and virtue, wealth and wisdom, are inseparable companions. Some have intimated to me that if I was not already rich, I should be soon, from the fact that I had a great deal due me for pills and salve, sold on credit. Well, this is encouraging as far as it goes, but the facts of the case

are likely to give very indifferent encouragment to my creditors—they are these : I had trusted out a large amount of these articles some years ago, when credit was in fashion, and the times were supposed to be good. But when the time arrived for a return of the avails of those sales, instead of money, I got notice of bankruptcy, and in many instances had to pay the postage on these, when I expected remittances in good lawful currency. Thus leaving me to pay my own debts—and the resources on which I relied for so doing, entirely exhausted.

My confidence in God, and the integrity of my friends, admonishes me that no adventitious aid is required to call forth sympathy or supplies. The eloquence that would excite to action, is heard in the roar of the flames that destroyed my home, and devoured my substance—in the bright blaze that aroused my wife and family from sleep, in the middle of the night, and drove them from the shelter of my roof and the comforts of my fireside, and at one fell swoop reduced to ashes my means of temporal support and domestic comfort.

Thus I have given a plain statement of facts, that has reduced me to poverty and want. I am admonished by that Gospel I have preached for forty-nine years, that it is my duty to be resigned to my lot, and still be diligent in business, and fervent in spirit, serving the Lord ; hoping this narrative will do good, and encourage the reader to trust in the Lord, and serve him with a perfect heart, in all the ordinances of his Church.

THE SOUL-CHEERING DOCTRINE OF THREE PERSONS IN ONE GOD.

CLEARLY PROVED

FROM MATTER OF FACT

AND

FIRST PRINCIPLES OF REASON,

IN A LETTER TO MR ALLEN,
Printer of the Pittsfield Sun.

BY HIS SINCERE FRIEND,
B. HIBBARD, MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

Prove all things ; hold fast that which is good.--1 Thess. v. 21

TO MR. ALLEN

Dear Sir :—

It is a long time since I wrote you any thing for your useful paper; having been absent from these parts for some time, but having occasionally seen some subjects on Unitarian sentiments, by some anonymous writers of that faith and order, and printed in your paper, I presume for the express purpose of exciting attention to the all-important subject of a Trinity of persons in the Divine essence; but I have no thought of answering those anonymous writers in this communication to you; but of expressing to you, sir, that on reading them, my attention was called up to examine the subject of three persons in one God, more minutely; which it seems they have set at nought, as erroneous. And having read many learned authors, and found none who have arranged their arguments so as to exactly suit my mind; possibly because my train of thinking is peculiar to myself, and because they allowed the Unitarian, that three persons in one God could not be proved from the first principles of reason, as though the doctrine was contrary thereto. This I could not allow; I shall therefore attempt to show from first principles of reason, that the doctrine is not only scriptural, but perfectly reasonable. I first define what reason is, and how it may be known in its latent and manifest

forms. And, first, *reason* is that property of the human mind, that enables us to mark a distinction between one thing and another. And *reasoning*, which is also called reason, (in the plural) is known by not confounding distinct things. When a man is delirious, he talks incoherently—we say he has lost his reason, or has no reason in exercise. If we draw wrong conclusions from propositions laid down, it is not reason, but a confusion of the mind, or a want of integrity. A deceived man, or rather one who desires to deceive, labors to confound distinct things in such an artful way as to confuse the mind of the hearer. This important doctrine of three persons in one God, I shall explain in the following manner; taking for granted that all believe in the existence of a God that possesses natural and moral perfections, and that he is eternally the same; a spirit, without body or parts, omniscient—"everywhere present, beholding the evil and the good." We argue that God is without body or parts, from the fact that two bodies of substance cannot occupy the same place at the same time. But God is omnipresent always, in all places.

Now, if God exists indivisible, and possesses natural and moral perfections—which he most certainly does—then we argue he must have those natural and moral perfections in constant exercise, or they would be useless, and a useless property would be an imperfection. It would be absurd in us to harbor such a thought of the Divine Being. One of his natural perfections is LIFE. If he had not this in exercise at

all times, he would be sometimes dead. Another natural perfection is *efficiency*, or power to begin motion, and to do what he has a mind to do, without control. Another natural perfection of the Divine Being is *speech*, but who did he speak to before angels or men were made? If God be infinite in possessing the properties of his Divine essence, then he must have an exercise of all those perfections, or he could not be perfect and happy in himself. To notice his *power*, *wisdom*, and *goodness*, if he possess more than he has a use for, or than he has in exercise, the redundancy would be useless; and a useless property would render him imperfect, which is absurd in us to think of the Divine Being. But God is not imperfect, and therefore he must exercise all his power, wisdom, and goodness. But this cannot be done in creation; though he should create ten thousand such worlds and systems as this, he would not exercise all his power. His power is infinite and eternal; should he therefore attempt to exercise in creation, he must make an infinite and eternal substance, and this could not be, because he who created would exist prior to the creature; therefore God could not exercise eternally his infinite power in creation. But he must exercise all the infinite properties of his Divine essence, or he cannot be perfect and immutable. And as he cannot exercise them in creation, he must exercise them in himself. And this argues two things. 1st. An agent acting; and 2nd, an object acted upon. An object must be able to receive and sustain the operations of the agent, and therefore

must be equal to the agent, and as eternal as the agent; and be as able to give, as receive from the agent; and their operations must harmonize, which will argue a third, which is the spirit emanating from the two, and personates a third mode of subsistence in the one Divine Being, or three persons. For I understand *mode* of subsistence to be the same as *person*, and is really identity in the Divine essence. Now, then, these modes, or persons, are equal. And the perfect union of the two first, implies a third person, or mode of subsistence, that partakes of the nature of the two, and is equal to either.* And the three are essential modes for union, and an exercise of all the properties or perfections of the Divine essence. The actions of an indivisible agent supposes something to act upon; and that something must be able to receive, enjoy, and sustain the action. But before time or creation, there was nothing to act upon, and even now, all creation is not sufficient to receive an act or display of all infinite power. God measured out his power in creation. He set a compass, as we read in Proverbs, chap. viii. Creation has bounds somewhere, that the infinite God did not exercise all his power in this work. He might have added to creation ten thousand such systems as this; or he could strike this system into nothing again, should he please

* Agreeable to this view of the subject, the apostle expresses himself, Ephesians 5 : 20, "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." In like manner also, in Col. 3 : 17.

to do it. He doeth whatsoever seemeth him good: but he must exercise the infinite power that he possesses, or it cannot be eternal or immutable; and if he subsist in one indivisible mode only, as the Unitarians say, there is nothing to act upon, or to receive and sustain an infinite act;—three modes of subsistence or persons must be understood to exist in the divine essence, to constitute the perfections of action in harmony. And these are not three separate modes of subsistence; but I say three distinct modes. And the priority seemingly indicated, is not a priority of time, of dignity, or of nature, but a priority of *order* only. This being premised, and keeping in mind always, that these distinct modes of subsistence constitute personalities only. And as the divine nature is simple, uniform, and indivisible; it must partake of personalities, otherwise the Divine Being could not know his own immutability. For if the Divine Being subsist in one single mode only, and can subsist in no more than one, as Unitarianism teaches us, how can he know his own immutability, or his omniscience? How is it possible that he could? It could not be by memory; it could not be by comparison, or by both united. Where could memory begin? Where could it end, in that which is necessarily immutable? If God possess infinite wisdom, which he most certainly does, he must exercise it, or it would be useless. God must know, or it would demonstrate an imperfection in him; but to only know all things in creation, though creation were ten thousand times larger than it is, it would be

finite knowledge. But God must know himself to have an exercise of infinite knowledge. And to be perfect, he must exercise all the attributes or properties of the divine essence. But how can this be done, unless it is done in himself? And how can that be, unless he subsist in three distinct modes, or persons? He must not only have an exercise for every property of his natural and moral image now, but he must have had an eternal exercise of them. Or it might be said he was once what he is not now, or that he is imperfect. And to say this of the Divine Being, would be absurd and impious.

You see, sir, that I have got into a deep subject, but do not be frightened; I am not lost, neither have I lost my Bible. My train of thinking arises still from that blessed book, for there we are informed that God made man in his own image; and as I can safely reason from the creature up to the Creator, though I cannot reason from the Creator down; because I can only know the Creator by the works of his hands, and the revelation he has given of himself. Now then, as man was made in the image of God, I say, that what God gave him to constitute the natural and moral image of God in him; that also God must possess himself, with only this difference; the creature is finite, but the Creator is infinite. Well, then, God gave to man not only the power of reason, and to know and understand; but the power of speech, to communicate to others. God must have possessed this power of speech himself, or he could not have endued his creature with it. And as he is infinite, he

must have possessed it eternally; and if he had no use for it, it was a useless perfection of the divine essence, and must have rendered him imperfect and unhappy. To suppose this, is a contradiction and an absurdity. But if he used it, to whom did he speak before angels and men were made, unless there were three persons in the divine essence? Therefore, three distinct modes of subsistence or persons are essential in order to reasonably account for the exercise of the infinite perfection or faculty of speech. And therefore God, before he made man, spake and said, "Let us make man in our image;" herein he spoke to the Trinity. And the image of God in man is most clearly manifest, in this, that man was made *male* and *female;* here is two distinct persons, and an immortal soul, or invigorating principle called spirit, which is a third person, and yet their name was called Adam in the singular. Now we see in man the image of God; three distinct persons, or modes of subsistence, viz. *male*, *female*, and spirit, and yet but one man that was alone, and had not an help mate; and God said it is not good for man to be alone. But God called their name Adam in the day when they were created, Gen. v. 2.

I think this is a scriptural and rational demonstration of three persons in one God. And though the names of Father and Son, are now applied to God, to distinguish two persons in the Deity, yet these names were not eternal; they had a beginning. Yet, the divine essence will never cease to be known to angels and men through all future eternity, but by those

names. So the name Creator was not without beginning: he who created was not Creator, until he created something, so he who is Father, was not Father until he had a son, or child; and he who is the Son of God, is so emphatically, because he is very God, and very man; so we are to understand him, Matt. xxvi. 63, 64.

Therefore, he who is the Son of God, did subsist in the divine essence, before he was a man or son. And he who is Father, also subsisted in the divine essence before he was Father, and yet but one essence. And still they subsist in one divine essence, and will never cease to be Father and Son, through all future eternity. And therefore it is proper to say eternal Son; but not eternally begotten.

I am aware that Unitarians will object to three persons, or modes of subsistence in God; because the Divine Being exists indivisibly. I grant he is necessarily indivisible. But he possesses perfections of Divine life, intelligence, moral excellence, and efficiency, as well as the other properties or perfections. I shall establish the axiom of three modes of subsistence or persons. But of efficiency, the opinions of those who believe in a Trinity, and those who do not are very different. And in arguing this point of difference, it is necessary to lay aside all views of creation and providence. For the word efficiency, when speaking of the perfections of the divine essence, is not to be understood as the beginning of motion, but of motion without beginning.

But Divine efficiency, as it is a perfection or property of the divine essence, we must consider it energetic within the divine essence itself, in a way consistent with necessary existence, perfection, and happiness. But creating efficiency is only a certain modification of active energy. God possessed efficiency before creation and providence. And also he possessed life, intelligence, and moral excellence. And though creation has not been from all eternity, yet it does not follow, that there ever was in God the absence of any ability to display a creative power, any more than there has been the absence of life or goodness. He can live to himself, and hath life in himself; so also had Christ life in himself, as we read, John v. 26. It must therefore follow, in order to preserve the idea of the absolute, eternal, and immutable perfections of the Divine Being, that the Divine efficiency ever was, now is, and ever will be exerted or manifested in the divine essence, without variation, change, or diminution, from everlasting to everlasting; unceasingly, by the law or economy of the Divine essence and perfections; constituting the Divine Being necessarily absolute, independent, and altogether perfect within himself; and that as much so before creation and providence, as since; and would still continue to be so, were creation and providence forever struck out of existence; otherwise the Divine Being must be mutable.

But, as it is a positive law or axiom, that the essence of every being must partake of the nature of its necessary and essential perfections; therefore, the

divine essence must necessarily, and essentially, partake of the activity, energy, operation, and influence of these divine perfections, which necessarily inhere in it; and which is efficiency. And considering this efficiency as eternal, immense, and immutable; and as necessary to the very existence, perfection, and happiness of the Divine Being, as life; we may therefore safely affirm, that it is a necessary law of the divine nature, to be active, energetic, operative, and influential; without which, the Divine Being could not be perfect and happy in himself.

Now to find identity in a being possessing such properties as has been described, is by no means difficult. And to find distinct identities, as power, wisdom, speech, &c., which are all identities; but to prove him indivisible, and at the same time possessing such properties, we shall find somewhat difficult, unless we are careful to use the word *distinct* instead of the word different; therefore to subsist in three distinct modes, is the statement in this subject: In speaking of modes, as applied to the personality of the divine essence, all that I mean is, that such is the perfections of the divine life, and moral excellence, that it is as natural, and necessary for the divine essence to subsist in three distinct modes, as it is for that essence to exist. All that we are to understand by a divine person is, the divine essence and perfections subsisting in a distinct, moral, and incommunicable manner of subsistence; which I call mode or person, at pleasure.

With regard to three modes of subsistence in

the divine essence, I say, there are three, and there can be no more than three; and that there are three; —*notice*,

1st. The agent.

2d. The object.

3d. The union.

Or, 1st. God subsists in essence.

2d. He subsists in perfections.

3d. He subsists in harmonious action.

These distinct modes of subsistence are also distinct offices, yet all equally partake of the one divine essence; therefore there are three, and there can be no more than three, for if the first operate in a way to form a fourth, it would do away by superseding the necessity of the second, and if the second operate in a way to form a fourth, it would do away the first; and if the third operate in a way to form a fourth, it would do away, by superseding the necessity of the first or second. Therefore there are three, and there can be only three.

Now three distinct and incommunicable modes of subsistence of the divine essence and perfections within the Divine Being itself, discover to us how the Divine Being does necessarily subsist in the full and perfect exercise of the divine efficiency; and also of all the other divine perfections through every point of eternity and immensity. And upon no other principle is it possible for created intelligences to have just and becoming conceptions and notions of the Divine Being, and of all the divine perfections, natural and moral; as for example, notice the four following:

1st. The divine intelligence.

2d. Eternity.

3d. Immensity.

And 4th. Immutability.

1st. *Of Intelligence.*—If intelligence be according to the nature of every being possessed of it, it must be so in the Divine Being, and if the Divine Being subsists in one mode only, the divine intelligence must also subsist in one mode only; and if the divine intelligence subsist in one mode only, the divine ideas must all be directed one way only; and if the divine ideas be directed in one way only, it is impossible for the Divine Being to be omniscient; because the divine intelligence could not operate in all directions at the same time. But grant that there are three distinct modes of subsistence, or persons; and at once we discover how it is possible for the Divine Being to be omniscient. Hence, the perfect exercise of omniscience leads directly to the doctrine of the Trinity.

2d. The idea of eternity embraces both past and future, and is simple and indivisible; and if *fully comprehended*, must be comprehended all at once; which the Divine Being cannot do, if he subsist in one mode only; for one mode only of subsistence can trace one idea only in one way, at the very same moment. Therefore, if the Divine Being subsist in one mode only, and can subsist in no more than one, he cannot comprehend his own eternity.

3d. The idea we have of immensity embraces a boundless circumference, and is simple and indivisible; and if comprehended fully, and perfectly, it must be comprehended all at once. Now if the Divine Being subsist in one mode only, and can subsist in no more than one, he can direct his thoughts only in one way at the same moment; and therefore cannot comprehend his own immensity.

4th. The idea also of immutability, is perfectly simple and indivisible; and when applied to that which is eternal and immense, embraces all directions at once, and must be comprehended all at once, if comprehended perfectly. And if the Divine Being subsist in one mode only, he can direct his thought only in one way at the same moment, and therefore cannot comprehend his own immutability.

But if God subsist in three distinct modes or persons, he can direct his thoughts from all the extremes of eternity and immensity in the very same moment, and thereby perfectly comprehend his own immutability.—Therefore there must be three persons in the divine essence, otherwise the Divine Being cannot perfectly comprehend his own immutability, immensity, eternity, and intelligence. Hence the full and perfect knowledge of those, leads directly to the doctrine of the Trinity. And these four propositions run directly into one another, and support the general argument with the most clear and convincing evidence.

The absolute perfections of the divine essence is the foundation of its own distinct personality. We, sir, who believe in a Trinity, presume it is not possible to prove, by fair reasoning and demonstration, that

absolute and underived self-existence and perfection, both natural and moral, can subsist in one mode only, and can subsist in no more than one ; and we presume most respectfully, to call for proof.

If by fair reasoning and demonstration, we have proved that the divine essence must necessarily subsist in *distinction* and *union*, we hope that those who deny it, will favor us with demonstrations equally clear ; but this we presume they cannot do.

The correctness of our views is demonstrated from the absolute perfection of the divine essence. To pursue the subject a little further, we discover that there is in the Divine Being, a power or perfection, by which the Divine Being is able to express his will, or make a promise, or give a command ; but if the divine essence subsist in one single mode only, and can subsist in no more than one, how is it possible for him to express his will at all, or to give a command, or make a promise ? Can the same single mode of subsistence be both agent and object at the same time ? No, that is impossible ; but as the divine will was as perfect in its operation and energy before creation and providence, as since ; and as it would still continue to be as perfect as it now is, should creation and providence be for ever done away ; it is of the greatest importance that we should study the divine will, according to its own nature ; and in doing so, we discover, that it is as necessary that the divine will should be *expressed*, *received*, and *ratified*, as it is for the Divine Being to exist. And this cannot be done perfectly, only in himself by three

persons or modes of subsistence ; and if the divine will be not *expressed*, *received*, and *ratified*, there can be no perfect image of the divine perfections, in consistency with the divine nature, in all the extent of eternity, immensity, and immutability. It is utterly impossible for creation and providence to receive an absolute, eternal, immense, and immutable impression of the divine image. And if there be no such impression of the divine image in creation, there must be one in the divine essence itself, otherwise the divine will could never operate in the unlimited extent of its own nature.

It is well known among men, that a command signified by one to another, implies neither superiority nor inferiority in many thousand instances. It is equally well known, that inequality of office, in many instances, implies no inequality of personality. Indeed it is impossible that there can be inequality of personality where the essence is equally perfect. Therefore no objection can arise to three distinct persons in one God, on a supposed ground that one would be superior to the other.

I have taken care to so study the perfections or properties of the Divine Being, that I may clearly view each ; having exercise according to their nature and eternity. The exercise of those divine properties in creation and providence, are all by measure, and therefore those who believe that God decreed all things that come to pass in creation or time, make difficulty for themselves and others, and confound physical with moral causes. I am sorry for those learned scholars

who say, they cannot see any difference in the foreknowledge God has of things that come to pass by the moral agency of his creatures; and a deeree that such things should be. With regard to this, we ought to consider God to be an infinitely free agent himself; not dependent on creation and providence for a display of any of the perfections of his divine essence; he displays them all freely without.

We have often heard about an eternal decree, and this is true that there is an eternal decree when applied to that perfection of the Divine Being, by which he can express his will, make a promise, or give a command. For in order that the Divine Being should be perfect, his will must be expressed, received, and ratified; but this cannot be done in creation and providence; it can be only done in himself; because he alone is eternal. Creation and providence cannot receive nor ratify an eternal decree, or expression of the eternal will.

Therefore, to account for an eternal decree in creation, is absurd; it is a wrong application of a truth. I apprehend that those who have puzzled their own minds about eternal decrees, will feel relieved when they consider that an eternal decree can only have its accomplishment in the Divine Being himself; by three modes of subsistence in the one divine essence.

It is absurd to suppose that the Divine Being should express any more of his will to his creatures for them to receive and ratify, than what they were able to receive and ratify. They cannot be accountable for any more of the will of God, than they can obey. And

it is a fact, that some expressions of his will in creation and providences are ratified only by the agency of God without his rational creatures: and some by the agency of God with his rational creatures; the sun, moon, and stars, all run their courses by the agency of God alone. But the worship of God is not performed by rational creatures without the agency of the creature; therefore we are obligated to do his will thus far; and though we, by reason of sin, have rendered ourselves incapable of performing one act pleasing or acceptable to God without his agency or grace; yet we are capable of performing those acts of repentance and faith pleasing to God, which he requires of us, because the fact is, the quickening grace of God is freely imparted to every one in sufficient measure for the work of repentance and faith that God requires of all men every where.

This is one of the most obvious truths contained in revelation. And yet this truth is always a subject of cavil and unbelief, by all those who wish to live in their sins, or excuse themselves by intimating that their sins were an effect of an eternal decree.

We see by what has already been said, that God could not exercise all his infinite power and wisdom in creation, and therefore he must exercise it in himself. Knowledge and power, and will, are measured out in creation and providence, just so much, and no more. God is an infinitely free agent; therefore he knows as it respects creation and providence, just what he has a mind to know, and what he has not a

mind to know, he lets alone. But some have asked me, doth not God know all things? I answer, yes, and more than all things; he not only knows all that is in creation and providence, which is all things that are numbered; but he knows immensity, that is not numbered. Yet he knows just what he has a mind to know, and what he has not a mind to know, he lets alone. But I have been asked again, what might he know that he does not know? or what does he not know? I answer, he does not know that you are dead, seeing you are alive; but he might know it, if he would. He does not know that there are two moons to this world, seeing there is but one; but he might know there were two, if he would make another, and who dare to say he could not make another moon to this world? But he has not been pleased to do it, and therefore we ought to be thankful for one, though we are not benefitted with moonlight but half the time. God doeth whatsoever seemeth him good, and it is for me and others to be thankful for what he has done, and to magnify his name; which I have endeavored to do, by exhibiting the reasons for three persons in one God, in which I think his name is magnified.

I have now expressed my mode of thinking on the important subject of the Trinity, and the divine perfections. But I have not stated all my thoughts. I will, however, add this: that by whatever names the Divine Being has been pleased to make himself known to his creatures, they cannot serve the Unitarians to disprove three persons in one God; but the

Trinitarians have just claim to those names, to prove three persons in one God.

I am, dear sir, yours, and the public's
humble servant,
B. HIBBARD.

Canaan, Oct. 12, 1832.

My friend, Mr. Allen, was not a Unitarian, but a gentleman of a liberal mind, and fond of research; and having published some remarks of a Unitarian, I thought it best to give my views of three persons in one God, thereby at least I could put a stop to the publication of Unitarian principles in his paper, as I believed Mr. Allen would publish the arguments against Unitarianism, as readily as for it, and if he admitted theological discussions, it would change the political character of his paper. He saw this at once, and very handsomely declined publishing any more polemical essays. Besides, he objected to the one I had written, as being too lengthy for a newspaper. So I was requested to have it printed in pamphlet form. It was so well received by the Trinitarians that I thought to preserve it, by inserting it in my Memoirs. And as there is no being that is eternal, and unoriginated but the Deity himself, and as it is generally believed, even by the Unitarians, that he possesses attributes or perfections, the exercise of

which must demonstrate that he subsists in a mode that he could exercise them himself as an agent that acts in conjunction with another agent, that receives the command of the first agent, and their acts must be in harmony. Therefore, it is said of Christ, the second agent, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." —Heb. 10 : 9. And as Christ is said to be in the express image of his person, the person of God—Hebrews 1 : 3, it is therefore proper to apply the word person to God and Christ. And as the pronoun *he*, is applied in the Scripture to the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost, the word person is therefore properly applied to the Holy Ghost, as the third person in the Trinity. The relative nouns of father and son, I have said were not eternal—yet he that is Father, and he that is Son, did subsist in the divine essence eternally. The manifestations, or acts of the Divine Being, do not possess Divinity in themselves, though they are the acts of a Divine Being—confounding the acts of the Deity with Divinity, was the error of the heathen in introducing a plurality of Gods. Many authors, in refuting the errors of polytheism, have inadvertently Deified the acts and perfections of the Divine Being, by calling many things infinite, that is not infinite. None but God is infinite, and yet how often we hear the word infinite used in an unguarded manner. One in his solemn address to the throne of grace, said, "We are under infinite obligations to thee," as though his obligations were as eternal and unoriginated as the Divine Being. It may be thought that the good word infinite would

do no harm if it was used unguardedly; it is a word that sounds eloquently, and to say this or that is infinite, it will make *this* or *that* worthy of attention. But it may not always be the truth.

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